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An engine of the Indian Airlines Airbus sits close to the tail section after the crash.
(Reuter wirephoto)



The remains of the Indian Airlines Airbus.
(Reuter wirephoto)



Fire brigade personnel try to control the fire of the Airbus at Bangalore airport.
(Reuter wirephoto)

Aoun captures LF stronghold

Death cries mingle with gunfire in devastated Beirut

BEIRUT, Feb 16, (Agencies): East Beirut shook to widespread shelling today and wounded civilians cried for help from apartment blocks set on fire by the bloodiest battle of the inter-Christian war.

General Michel Aoun claimed to have scored a major victory over the Lebanese Forces (LF) militia, saying he had seized their stronghold of Ain Al-Roumanieh after two days of ferocious tank and artillery battles.

Aoun's troops were combing the area for militiamen, whose command was negotiating the terms of their surrender to Aoun's forces, the sources said.

The militiamen wanted to hold on to their weapons, while Gen. Aoun insisted that they give up with their hands behind their heads, "one, source said.

The onslaught was the third against LF strongholds since fighting erupted on Jan 31 when Aoun, seeking sole control of the Christian enclave, ordered the militia to disband.

The military operation is now in the stage of clearing after the main military operation," Aoun said in a radio broadcast after fighting died down in Ain Al-Roumanieh.

"There are no more problems in Ain Al-Roumanieh... I can say it has been liberated from militia pressure and liberated from oppression which it has been subject to."

The loss of the district would be a major blow for the 10,000-strong LF. Aoun's forces last week overran an LF base at Dibayeh north of Beirut and fought the militia to a standstill on Qubat ridge overlooking the capital.

As dusk fell today tank, artillery and machinegun fire broke out over the areas of East Beirut, starting fires in high-rise blocks.

Aoun's forces shelled two of the last areas controlled by the LF in East Beirut, Dora and Ashrafieh, while the militia fired on Aoun's positions in Yarzeh, Baabda and Hazmieh.

Hospitals, desperately short of blood, oxygen and bandages, crammed the wounded into emergency basement wards for safety.

Many casualties could not be rescued from the ruins of 10-storey apartment blocks in Ain Al-Roumanieh, an area of about nine square km (5.5 sq miles) which once housed 50,000 people.

"We could hear them screaming, but no one could help them and I don't know what happened to them," said George Nasir, 28, being treated in Hayek hospital for strapped wounds to his legs.

Radio stations carried appeals for rescue from people telephoning from burning buildings.

Aoun's artillery emplacements targeted another stronghold of Lebanese Forces also hit the mountaintop Notre Dame orphanage in Harissa, north of Beirut.

The orphanage called on relatives to evict the orphans "as soon as possible because we cannot continue providing them with our services."



Facing each other

Soldiers and residents of the capital of Soviet Tajikistan face each other in the downtown area of Dushanbe where a state of emergency and curfew were declared as tension there continues. (Reuter wirephoto)

Quit, Tajiks ask leaders

Armenians mutilated

MOSCOW, Feb 16, (Agencies): Tajik Communist Party officials today rejected offers by the republic's leaders to resign, and the legislature formed a committee to investigate more than a dozen deaths in ethnic rioting.

Thousands of protesters yesterday defied a ban on demonstrations to demand the resignations of leaders in their Soviet Asian republic. On Wednesday, the party chief, premier and president offered to resign, but said they could not quit until the party and local Parliament released them.

The Tajik party Central Committee declined to accept the offers and decided to keep the current leadership, said Anatoly Larenok, a correspondent for the national newspaper Vozdushny transport. Russian for air transport.

Meanwhile, twelve mutilated corpses, 11 of them Armenians from a home for invalids, have been found in a sand pit in Soviet Azerbaijan, the official news agency Tass said today.

Tass did not say who was suspected of the killings. But the corpses — 11 women and one man — appeared to be victims of an ethnic conflict between Armenians and Azerbaijanis which has killed hundreds over the past two years.

Eleven were identified as handicapped Armenians who disappeared from a home for invalids

in the Azerbaijani city of Gyandza on Jan 24, Tass said.

Residents interviewed by telephone said the streets were quiet today in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan. Western reporters have been barred from travelling to the region.

The republic's interior Ministry raised the death toll from 18 to 20 in the violence that began Saturday, Larenok said. An Interior Ministry spokesman said 568 people were injured, of whom 178 are hospitalized. Forty-two were arrested.

The presidium of the Tajikistan Supreme Soviet formed a special deputies commission to investigate the deaths, said Boris K. Pugo.

The situations during the aggravation of events were complex. For example, there were many bullet wounds. But so far it's not known who was shooting and from where," Pugo told the army newspaper Red Star.

In another sign of a split at the top, Interior Minister Mamadov Navzhanov called on party and government officials "to come out to the people and not hide in their offices."

Islamic fundamentalists mobbed a bus and attacked Tajik girls because their heads were uncovered, and protesters demanded a ban on the sale of pork in the mainly Sunni Muslim republic, news reports said.

UN urged to expel Tehran

LONDON, Feb 16, (Reuters): More than 200 British members of Parliament urged the United Nations today to expel Iran for what they called repressive and terrorist policies.

The group, from all of Britain's main political parties, urged UN recognition of the Iraq-based National Council of Resistance of Iran, the exiled opposition led by Massoud Rajavi.

A statement by the 248 politicians said the enforced death threat against British author Salman Rushdie by Iranian spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei proved "that terrorism is an inherent characteristic of the ruling regime in Iran."

The British politicians appealed to follow the lead of parliamentarians in Europe who signed a similar petition on Feb 2.

They said the death threat against Rushdie, accused of blaspheming against Islam, in his novel "The Satanic Verses," was "an extension of the domestic repression in Iran which has to date brought about 90,000 political executions."

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Daphne Parish, who worked for a private hospital in Baghdad, was arrested with journalist Farzad Bazoft while he was checking reports of an explosion at a military installation south of Baghdad for Britain's Observer newspaper last year. Parish took him to the area in a hospital car.

Black box to be analysed abroad IA chairman quits

NEW DELHI, Feb 16. (Agencies): The chairman of beleaguered Indian Airlines resigned today, saying he accepted responsibility for a recent plane crash in southern India that killed 91 people.

Prime Minister V.P. Singh said he "reluctantly" accepted the resignation of R.K. Prasad and asked the joint secretary of the Civil Aviation Ministry, P.C. Sen, to take over as managing director of the government-owned domestic carrier.

Prasad joined Indian Airlines in 1956 and took over as chairman and managing director last April.

The airline has been dogged for years by complaints of frequent schedule delays and allegations of mismanagement, poor morale among staff, inadequate supervision and training of pilots and poor maintenance of planes.

Details of Prasad's resignation were not released by the government, except that he had accepted "moral responsibility" for the crash.

A three-month-old Indian Airlines Airbus 320 crashed on Wednesday about 50 yards (metres) short of the airport runway in Bangalore. The airplane said 146 people were on the hour-long flight from Bombay and 55 survived.

The government has ordered an investigation into the cause of the crash. The weather was clear and there were no signs of an emergency on board, officials said.

Some Indian newspapers have speculated the crash of the sophisticated aircraft may have occurred because the pilot tried to change the mode of control from computer to manual.

Others reports have suggested the plane's instruments may have indicated the wrong height, leading the pilot to lower the plane earlier than he should have. Both the pilot and the co-pilot died in the crash.

The twin-engined, narrow-bodied jet is the first civilian airliner with a fully-computerized flight control system.

Airline Minister Arif Mohammed Khan said the plane's "black box," the digital flight data recorder that logs all changes in altitude, speed and direction, would be sent abroad for analysis. He refused to say where it would be sent. But he said the recorder would not be sent to France, or to any other country involved in the consortium which built it.

The plane is manufactured by Airbus Industrie, a European consortium based in France. Airbus sent a team of experts to Bangalore to help in the investigation.

At least 36 foreigners were on the flight, officials said. American, Japanese, West German, British, Sudanese, Somalian and French nationals were on the plane but the airline did not give complete details of nationalities.

Wednesday's crash is the second accident involving an Airbus 320 and the first of an Airbus 320 in commercial service.

Britain, West Germany and Spain as well as

recorders that logs all changes in altitude, speed and direction, would be sent abroad for analysis. He refused to say where it would be sent. But he said the recorder would not be sent to France, or to any other country involved in the consortium which built it.

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France are partners in Airbus Industrie, the plane's builder, and aviation experts said Khan's decision left the United States as the most likely destination of the recorder.

Indian officials said the reason for not sending the recorder to any consortium member was to reassure Indian public opinion that everything was being done to find the cause of the crash impartially.

Preliminary reports on the crash show similarities to an accident involving another model in 1988, a top Indian official said today.

Probir Sen, director-general of Indian Civil Aviation, said both planes were flown by highly experienced pilots.

"Also, in both cases, the aircraft suffered a sudden loss of height," he said in an interview.

Sen said India was looking for a country other than France to decode the flight data recorder, which should yield clues to the cause of Wednesday's crash, because that was where the aircraft was assembled.

The government has imposed an all-day curfew every Friday for the last two months because they feared anti-Islamic speeches in mosques could incite demonstrators. At least 50,000 people congregate for prayers at the Jama Masjid, the largest mosque in the city of one million people.

Pakistan yesterday rejected as "preposterous" claims it is fomenting a militant secessionist movement in India's troubled Jammu-Kashmir.

Foreign Secretary Tanvir Ahmed showed reporters a 26-page dossier of Indian charges against Pakistan and said: "This document is preposterous, ridiculous and a tissue of lies."

Muslim devotees fired on, two die

SRINAGAR, Feb 16. (Agencies): Security forces killed two people and wounded two others when they opened fire on anti-India demonstrators in Srinagar, and suspected Muslim secessionists shot two other men to death, police said.

The northern city has become the flashpoint of the Muslim separatist campaign in the Indian-controlled Kashmir region.

Police officials who cannot be identified under briefing rules said the paramilitary border security forces fired on about 2,000 Muslims after militants in the crowd had fired guns.

The crowd was staging a procession after weekly Muslim prayers in the Khanay Chowk district of Srinagar.

Police also said suspected militants fatally shot a local court clerk at his house. They said the clerk, a Muslim identified as Mehmood Jan, was killed for being a suspected informer.

An assistant manager of a government-run bank also was shot to death by suspected militants in downtown Habib Kadal as he was walking to his office, police said. They said it was not clear why the clerk, Anup Kumar, a Hindu, was killed.

The death, which occurred during a 10-hour relaxation of a 24-hour curfew, increased the overall toll to 96 people killed since Jan 20, when the latest violence in the decades-old secessionist movement flared.

The curfew was lifted today from 5 (0930 GMT Thursday) to 3 pm (0900 GMT), allowing worshippers to attend the weekly prayers for the first time this year.

Authorities had imposed an all-day curfew every Friday for the last two months because they feared anti-Islamic speeches in mosques could incite demonstrators. At least 50,000 people congregate for prayers at the Jama Masjid, the largest mosque in the city of one million people.

Pakistan yesterday rejected as "preposterous" claims it is fomenting a militant secessionist movement in India's troubled Jammu-Kashmir.

Foreign Secretary Tanvir Ahmed

Health charges

Insurance proposed

By Nash' Al Agha

THE Ministry of Health has concluded that it is impossible to continue with the free medical health services and it is now imperative that the health insurance scheme be introduced.

Speaking to the Seyassah, Planning Minister and acting Public Health Minister, Abdul Rahman Al Awadi said that the nineties will witness both a qualitative and quantum leap in the level of medical services provided by the state and these could only be effectively translated through the individual participation and involvement of the beneficiaries of these services.

Commenting on the leading medical issue AIDS, the official said that no full-fledged AIDS cases have been discovered in the country.

Law may stop
Aids deportation

By Diana Abou Haidar

INDIVIDUALS living and working in Kuwait who test positive for the AIDS virus will not be deported, according to the new law on AIDS that is expected to be passed by the Cabinet in a few weeks, according to Dr Hussain Al Momen, head of the Kuwait Third International Conference on AIDS press committee.

Momen said that 55 cases of infection with the virus have been identified in Kuwait. Seven of those were Kuwaitis and the rest were non-Kuwaitis.

Comments on the leading medical issue AIDS, the official said that no full-fledged AIDS cases have been discovered in the country.

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**Paula's
Opposites
Attract
still tops**

NEW YORK, Feb 16, (AP): Paula Abdul stayed on Wednesday in a row at the top of the pop singles record chart in the United States with her hit "Opposites Attract."

"Two to make it right" by Seduction topped up two notches to second position on the Cash Box magazine chart. "Janie's Got a Gun" by Arrowtown climbed from fifth to third spot.

Last week's number two hit, "How Am I Supposed to Live Without You" by Michael Bolton, slipped to fourth, while Rod Stewart's "Down Down" topped from third to fifth.

Scaling up the top list were "Dancing Queen" by Roxette, up from 13th to 12th, and "What Kind of Man Would I Be" by Chicago, up from 12th to 9th.

Two other newcomers to the list were "Price In Our Time" by Eddie Money, up from 11th to 8th, and "Tell Me Why" by Expose, up from 14th to 9th.

As for the Country and Western singles, "Heartbreak Hurricane" by Ricky Skaggs made it to number one on the Cash Box magazine chart. Second was Eddie Rabbitt's "On Second Thought," and "Overnight Success" by George Strait was third.

The top 10 pop singles, as rated by Cash Box magazine, with last week's nominees in brackets:

1. (1) Opposites Attract — Paula Abdul (Virginia)
2. (4) Two To Make It Right — Seduction (Vendetta-A and M)
3. (5) Janie's Got A Gun — Arrowtown (Geffen)
4. (2) How Am I Supposed to Live Without You — Michael Bolton (Columbia)
5. (13) Dangerous — Roxette (EMI)
6. (12) What Kind of Man Would I Be — Chicago (Roxette)
7. (7) Remember You — Skid Row (Atlantic)
8. (11) Peace In Our Time — Eddie Money (Columbia)
9. (14) Tell Me Why — Expose (Arista)
10. (3) Downtown Train — Rod Stewart (Warner Brothers)

The top 10 country-western singles, as rated by Cash Box magazine, with last week's position in brackets:

1. (1) Heartbreak Hurricane — Ricky Skaggs (Epic)
2. (10) On Second Thought — Eddie Rabbitt (Universal)
3. (3) Overnight Success — George Strait (MCA)
4. (6) Little Girl — Reba McEntire (MCA)
5. (9) No Matter How High — The Oak Ridge Boys (MCA)
6. (1) Fast Moving Train — Reba McEntire (RCA)
7. (12) Chains — Petty Loveless (MCA)
8. (16) Stand My Father In Me — Paul Overstreet (RCA)
9. (2) Southern Star — Alabama (RCA)
10. (14) Quittin' Time — Mary Chapin Carpenter (Columbia).

UK Harrods to shut fur salon

LONDON, Feb 16, (AP): Citing a sharp decline in sales, Harrods is closing its fur salon which has sold mink to the rich and famous for nearly a century.

The world renowned department store said Wednesday sales have dropped by 40 per cent over the last four years, but it deemed caving in to pressure from animal rights groups.

The salon, whose concession is held by fur retailer Grosvenor Canada, will close on April 21, following a decision 13 months ago by Harrods' parent company, House of Fraser PLC, to end fur sales at its other 62 stores.

According to government figures cited by Harrods, sales by Britain's biggest fur traders totalled 11 million pounds (\$19 million) in the first half of 1989, compared with 80 million (\$130 million) in all of 1984.

Five receive St Valentine's 'A Year of Love' award

TERNI, Italy, Feb 16, (AP): A woman who waged a two-year campaign to free her kidnapped son and a Lebanese militia fighter who turned to charity work were among five people who received awards from the town that calls itself St. Valentine's hometown.

The government of Terni, in central Italy's Umbria region, said it chose the winners of a "Year of Love" award from among 300 nominations received from five continents.

The annual prize, aimed at promoting Terni and the legacy of St. Valentine, awards either a gold medal or a cheque for 5 million lire (\$4,000), on the winner's preference.

AT and T offers language line

Simultaneous translation into 143 dialects world-wide

NEW YORK, Feb 16, (AP): American Telephone and Telegraph said it had expanded the availability of its simultaneous telephone translation service to customers worldwide.

The service called AT and T language line, offers English translation of telephone conversation in 143 languages and dialects. It is available to customers who pay a monthly fee of \$25 to \$50, plus a per-call charge of \$1.94 to \$2.75 a minute.

AT and T said it has a staff of interpreters on duty in Monterey, California, around the clock. The service also maintains a file of language experts who can be

called if the staff is confronted with a language they are unfamiliar with, the company said.

Among users of the service are the Hertz Rent-A-Car company and the city of Minneapolis, which uses it to translate calls to the city's emergency line.

The service also can be used by subscribers to translate English into a foreign language, AT and T said.

The phone company would not dis-

close the number of customers for the service or its projections of the possible market for it.

AT and T said that later this year, it plans to offer the service of a non-subscription basis that will allow occasional customers to use it for \$3.50 a minute.

The AT and T language line service, is aimed at businesses, institutions and government and social agencies, the company said.

PEOPLES AND PLACES

LOS ANGELES: Sylvester Stallone, John Travolta, Pia Zadora and Bo Derek were among the nominees for Razzie awards for the most dreadful performers of the decade.

The Golden Raspberry Foundation, a group of film fans who celebrate the worst in cinema, announced nominees Monday for the 10th Razzie awards.

Actor Atkins, Ryan O'Neal, Prince, Selleck and Travolta were nominated for worst actor of the decade. The nominees for worst actress of the 1980s were Miss Derek, Faye Dunaway, Madonna, Brooke Shields and Miss Zadora.

The nominees for worst new star of the decade nominees were Atkins, Madonna, Prince, Miss Zadora and Diana Scarwid of Silkwood.

Nominated as the worst films of the 1980s were Miss Derek's "Rebel," Howard The Duck, Miss Zadora's "The Lolele Lady," Miss Dunaway's "Monique Dearest" and Star Trek V.

The nominations are determined by ballots from more than 275 Raspberry Foundation members in 22 states, Canada and Switzerland, the Foundation said.

The awards will be presented on March 25, the night before the Academy Awards. (AP)

RIVIERA BEACH, Florida: Actor Ben Vereen and Mayer Marles Barry of Washington, DC, showed up at the same church service and addressed the congregation.

Vereen was expected, but Barry surprised worshippers at New Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church with his appearance Sunday and a short speech admitting a dependence on alcohol.

"Part of the recovery process is having a spiritual focus," said the Reverend Thomas Masters, the church's pastor. "We were full of love, forgiveness and support for him." (AP)

DALLAS: Texas Actor Gavin MacLeod said he does not regret having set sail on The Love Boat either for the television series' long-running cruise or its latest trip.

"Even though it's called mindless television, I think a lot of people would like to have been associated with mindless television and make that kind of money," MacLeod said.

The actor, who played the cruise boat's Captain Merrill Stubing, was promoting the new two-hour "Love Boat" television movie last week before its scheduled Monday night broadcast. (AP)

TOWSON, Maryland: Joe Clark, principal of a New Jersey High School who was criticized for his use of a baseball bat and bullhorn to move things along at school, said bats and bombs are needed for drug dealers and dealers of crack.

"Blow them out of the air, that's how you stop them," Clark told Towson State University students Sunday. "Drop a megaton bomb on the ship," he said of selling smugglers. "Blow them to smithereens."

To clear street corners, Clark would set upon small-time drug dealers with 100 bat-wielding women because "they're the dangerous, ferocious fighters."

The remedy for poverty and failure is simply, "do for yourself," he told the students. (AP)



Artist Art Grant shows off his five-tonne sculpture 'Kissing Lips' at Laguna Honda Hospital Feb 13. The

Valentine piece is made from one million Hershey's kisses. (Reuter wirephoto)

Marlies' Trump link

Model Marla Marlies, who has been romantically linked with US billionaire Donald Trump in published reports, is shown in this undated model agency photo. (Reuter wirephoto)

BOSTON: Actress Lee Remick says she has been given a clean bill of health after battling cancer and now wants to revive her career.

"I'm very lucky," said Remick, 54, in Boston last week to receive the Jack Lemmon award, given by the Wang Centre to an outstanding performing artist with a Massachusetts connection. "They treated me with all sorts of extraordinary things and removed that kind of money," MacLeod said.

The actor, who played the cruise boat's Captain Merrill Stubing, was promoting the new two-hour "Love Boat" television movie last week before its scheduled Monday night broadcast. (AP)

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Increasing length of day

Earth slows slightly

WASHINGTON, Feb 16, (UPI): A slight slowing of earth's rotation has increased the length of the day by about five ten-thousandths of a second every 10 days, the US Naval Observatory reported yesterday.

Astronomers observed the change, the largest since 1984, from data from the National Earth Orientation Service, a joint operation of the observatory, the National Geodetic Survey and the International Earth Rotation Service in France, an observatory statement said.

Previous changes in the length of the day have been related to changes in the average speed of Earth's east-west winds from large weather changes, which act on the surface of Earth to minutely change the speed of rotation, according to the statement.

PROVO, Utah: One of the American west's best-known editorial cartoonists has some simple advice for public figures who want to avoid being ridiculed by him on editorial pages across the country:

Drop dead: As far as nationally syndicated cartoonist Steve Bemis is concerned, dying is the best way public figures can expect to be treated fairly in his cartoons, which appear nearly in 200 newspapers across the United States.

Bemis says the job of cartoonists is to catalyze discussion. Some credit cartoons he drew for the newspaper the Arizona Republic as a factor in the impeachment of former Arizona Governor Evans Mechem.

Now, results from the 11-year twin study indicate that identical twins had a 50 per cent sharing of vocational interests, as measured by two standard psychological exams, Bemis said.

Genetics seemed to play a far lesser role in the job interests of fraternal twins, who showed a 10 per cent similarity on the tests, slightly less than the correlation between a parent and child.

Religiosity, as measured by tests that ask questions about how often a person attends religious services and would they like to take holy orders, showed a comparable pattern.

Bemis said there was 50 per cent similarity in the religious outlook of identical twins and a 20 per cent commonality among the fraternal twins.

The Minnesota study has been sharply criticized by scientists who argue that the number of twins examined is far too small to make any definite conclusions. Another possible problem, which Bemis concedes is that most of the reunited twins volunteered for the study, possibly indicating they were more alike than those who did not come forward.

Researchers who stress cultural and environmental factors over genetics in the development of personality and intelligence refused to comment on Bemis' latest research, which has not yet been published.

PARIS: The winds of change sweeping Eastern Europe have brought a new fashion gauziness to France — Soviet jeans and jackets.

But the clothes, which are selling like hot cakes, are designed and cut by Italian stylists before being stitched together in Moscow.

"They were styled for Europeans," a spokesman for France's Mossoix Department Store said.

"Have you ever seen Soviet jeans?" (Reuter)

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Simple values

Di upholds marriage

LONDON, Feb 16, (AP): Princess Diana says "very simple" values can triumph over the complex difficulties encountered in modern marriages.

Marriage offers stability, and perhaps that is why nearly 7,000 couples tie the knot every week in Britain, the Princess said Wednesday in a speech to Relate, a marriage guidance organisation.

"Sadly, for many of these marriages, reality fails to live up to expectations. When that happens most couples discover and draw on new reserves of love and strength," Diana said. "But for many, their own resources are not enough."

The Princess, a patron of Relate, presented the charity's family of the year award.

The winners were Rico and Heather Gopaul, both 30, and children Rico Jr., 7, Ryan, 6, Rickey, 3, and Rosita, 2. The mother and father are oars who care for mentally handicapped people at a hospital near their home in Colchester.

"I must admit to having been rather puzzled when I heard of the family of the year award. I didn't realize that family life was a competition, let alone one for which you got prizes," Diana said.

However, she said, the award was the tribute to the thousands of families whose daily lives were constructive, loving and unselfish.

"These are the families who give of their best ... to each other and to society, while quietly coping with a daunting array of pressures."

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3. Al-Balad Supermarket, Fahadet Wednesdays 4.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

4. EOE General Store, Salmy Saturdays 4.30

Argentina, UK restore ties

Dispute over Falklands remain unresolved: UN hails decision

LONDON, Feb 16, (AP): Britain and Argentina have welcomed the agreement to restore diplomatic ties severed nearly eight years ago by the Falklands war, but their dispute over ownership of the British-ruled islands goes on.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said on Sky television last night that the agreement reached by officials of the two countries in Madrid earlier in the day was a very good one.

"It underlines the fact that we have no quarrel with Argentina and this has been achieved without any sacrifice of (British) sovereignty" over the islands, he said.

But President Carlos Menem at a news conference in Buenos Aires repeated Argent-

ina's claim over the South Atlantic islands 300 miles (480 kms) off his country's coast. Argentine Foreign Minister Domingo Cavallo said the deal "means passing from a state of war to a state of peace."

At the same time, Menem moved quickly to finish the process of normalising relations by announcing that career diplomat Mario Campora, who is currently deputy foreign minister, would be named the new ambassador to Britain.

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has consistently refused to discuss Falklands sovereignty with Argentina. In return, Argentina refused until Thursday to say it regarded hostilities with Britain in the South Atlantic to be ended.

United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuelar said: "I very much welcome the decision to re-establish diplomatic relations. This immediately creates an atmosphere of confidence."

Talks between British and Argentine officials on resuming normal relations began last August after Menem said Argentina would not raise its claim to Falklands sovereignty at them.

Talks in Berne, Switzerland, in July 1984 founded over Argentina's insistence on raising the sovereignty issue in the face of Britain's refusal to discuss it.

The Falklands war erupted after Argentine forces invaded the islands on April 2, 1982. Britain sent a military task force, which recaptured them after a 74-day war. The fighting claimed the lives of 712 Argentines, 255 Britons and three islanders.

Argentina claims the islands, which it calls the Malvinas, are part of its Spanish colonial heritage and says Britain stole them. Britain denies this.

A key to the Madrid deal was Britain's agreement to lift its 150-mile (240 km)-radius military protection zone around the islands, from which Argentine warships and planes were excluded.

The zone was patrolled by British submarines, ships and planes, while the islands themselves are guarded by 2,000 British troops.

Sir Crispin Tickell, the diplomat who led the British team in Madrid, said: "The zone is being lifted (from March 31) ... what we have done instead is to create security areas of importance to both countries."

The British Foreign Office said last night that the two nations had agreed to inform one another about movements of their warships and military aircraft in key areas of the South Atlantic and give notice of large military exercises.

Under the deal, Argentine warships wishing to come within 50 miles (80 kms) of the islands and Argentine warplanes wishing to come within 70 miles (110 kms) will have to give 48 hours notice.

Menem said the Madrid deal opened up trade possibilities for Argentina, a major meat exporter. "Aside from having eliminated ... the possibilities of an armed conflict, it opens for us wide possibilities in ... the European Economic Community," he said.

per hour, 300 metres (980 feet) above the ground, Gendorf said.

Normally, he would have been cut loose and completed the jump. That wasn't possible because he lost consciousness, probably due to the cold," he said. The temperature was minus 4 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 20 Centigrade).

"I'll jump again as soon as I get the chance," Loeb, serving in the 252 para battalion from Niedersachsen, West Germany, said from a hospital bed after the accident. (Reuter wirephoto)

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Physicians said the bone marrow can be taken with little risk from an infant who is at least six months old.

The chances for a bone marrow match among siblings is about 25 per cent, while there is only a 1-in-20,000 chance of finding a matching donor in the general population.

No other family members match Anissa's bone marrow, and a search by the national

marrow donor programme of unrelated donors has failed to find a match.

While parents must give consent for children to be bone-marrow donors, the newspaper reported that a mother giving birth to a child for the purpose of providing a donor raises ethical questions.

"What they're doing ethically is very troubling, but on the other hand, I can sympathize with their desire to do everything possible to save their daughter's life," Alexander M. Capron, professor of law and medicine.

Mom gets pregnant to give girl marrow transplant

LOS ANGELES, Feb 16, (UPI): A 43-year-old woman whose daughter has leukemia has become pregnant in hopes the baby will be able to provide a bone-marrow transplant for the stricken teenager.

Mary Ayala, of Walnut, California, who is due to give birth in mid-April, hopes the newborn infant's bone marrow will be a match for her 17-year-old daughter, Anissa.

"I never thought I'd be pregnant at my age," the mother-to-be told the Los Angeles Times, "but when you're faced with the pos-

sibility that your child is going to die, you desperately seek, and whatever you need to do, you do it."

Physicians said the bone marrow can be taken with little risk from an infant who is at least six months old.

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Cheney peers through binoculars at the North Korean border. (Reuter wirephoto)

LDP win predicted in Japan election

TOKYO, Feb 16, (AP): Unusually high voter turnout is expected in Japan's parliamentary election this weekend, with more polls today showing the governing Liberal Democratic Party likely to stay in power.

Less than two days before the ballot, Japanese media predicted an 80-90 per cent voter turnout in Sunday's election for representatives to Parliament's powerful lower house.

The high voter interest reflects the importance of the election, which could drive the Liberal Democrats from their 34-year hold on power. Last July the Liberal Democrats lost control of the less powerful upper house in the wake of the imposition of an unpopular new sales tax and the influence-buying Recruit scandal, named after the firm at the centre of the controversy.

The newspaper Yomiuri Shimbun said today its poll showed that "the people's concern over the Recruit scandal and the consumption tax has weakened while concern over basic standard-of-living issues such as land, housing, prices and welfare has increased."

A survey by Kyodo News Service released today showed the Conservative governing party winning 46.7 per cent of the vote and the Japan Socialist Party, the No 1 opposition group, taking 23.8 per cent. The Liberal Democrats' share increased by 1.5 per cent from a Kyodo poll taken before parliamentary elections in 1986, while the Socialists registered 13.2 per cent support at that time.

Other media polls during the week have given the Liberal Democrats 259-285 seats in the 512-seat lower house, down from their current 295, and the Socialists 120-140 seats, up from their current 85.

A party needs a minimum of 257 seats for a simple majority in the chamber, which selects the prime minister and has the power to adopt the national budget and treaties without approval of the upper house, which can block legislation on other issues.

To all the surveys, 30-40 per cent of the voters polled remained uncommitted to any candidate, leaving open the possibility of a defeat for the governing party.

Yomiuri, Japan's largest newspaper, said 80 per cent of those surveyed will cast ballots, while Kyodo said 93 per cent of those they surveyed expected to. Voter turnout was 71 per cent in the 1986 balloting and 65 per cent in the upper house election last year. No margins of error were available for the polls.

Japanese officials today rebuffed suggestions by Soviet Premier Nikolai Ryzhkov that economic relations between their two countries should be considered separately from a thorny territorial dispute.

"We're not desperately in need of money, in fact we have too much," acting Foreign Ministry spokesman Shigeto Takenaka said when asked Japan's reaction to Ryzhkov's suggestion that Tokyo could miss out on economic opportunities in the Soviet Union if it continues to insist on the return of the southern Kuril Islands.

Takenaka said the disputed territory is the centrepiece of any relationship that might develop between Japan and the Soviet Union."

Cory plays down snub to Cheney

'Just leave it at that'

MANILA, Feb 16, (AP): President Corazon Aquino refused yesterday to be drawn into an argument with US President George Bush over his decision not to see US Defence Secretary Dick Cheney during his visit next week.

Bush, in an interview with the New York Daily News, said Aquino would "earn a great deal from Dick Cheney about the way we view the very important United States presence in the Pacific."

"President Bush and I have mutual respect for each other's personal and official views," Aquino said in a statement issued in response to request for comment on Bush's remarks published in Manila's newspapers.

"Regarding the visit of secretary Cheney, we have given our respective views. Let us just leave it at that," Aquino said.

Hawke calls snap election

Close fight likely

SYDNEY, Feb 16, (Reuter): Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke today called a snap election for March 24, and predicted a close fight as his Labour Party bids for a record fourth consecutive term in office.

"I'm not in any sense complacent or cocky about this campaign ... it's going to be a tight campaign," Hawke told a news conference where he announced the election.

Opinion polls show labour inching ahead of the Liberal/National Party coalition led by Andrew Peacock.

Political analysts said the campaign would hinge on economics, with Hawke defending his record and the conservative opposition, riven by leadership disputes, trying to show it has the ability to govern and do better.

"It is going to be a matter of people deciding which of the two major parties looks the most credible in pulling Australia out of the economic slump it's in," said Dean Jacobs, reader in politics at Flinders University, South Australia.

No-one was surprised by Hawke's decision to call the poll on March 24, almost two months early. Major parties have been involved in unofficial electioneering for months.

Despite voter discontent towards Labour because of high interest rates and other economic problems, the latest opinion polls show the Hawke government three percentage points ahead of the opposition.

A Morgan Gallup opinion poll released this week showed 50 per cent of Australians favoured the charismatic Hawke as prime minister, while only 18 per cent supported Peacock, who heads the Liberal Party.

"Clearly, (all the signs) suggest



Bob Hawke. (Reuter wirephoto)

that it is the right time to call an election," said Jacobs.

"Labour was certainly out of favour at the end of last year but it seems that the trendline has come back towards labour."

The opposition needs only a 2.6 per cent swing nationally to win power, or a net gain of 12 out of the 148 House of Representative (lower house) seats.

Hawke, who took office in 1983, has given Australians the choice between what he says is labour's visionary government, with a proven record of economic management, or a bankrupt opposition.

"There is a truth of Australian politics which has been reflected over a long period of time: if you can't govern yourselves, you can't govern the country," Hawke told today's news conference.

"Clearly, (all the signs) suggest

Nujoma elected President

UN chief to swear in new leader on March 21

WINDHOEK, Feb 16, (AP): Sam Nujoma, leader of the South-West Africa People's Organisation for 30 years, was elected Namibia's first President today in preparation for the territory's independence March 21.

The 72-member constituent assembly unanimously elected Nujoma, who helped found Swapo in 1960 and led it through a 23-year bush war against South African rule of Namibia, formerly called South-West Africa.

"On behalf of the Namibian people and myself I want to express my sincere appreciation for the trust and honour you have bestowed upon me," Nujoma told the assembly. "Once again I call on all Namibians to remain united behind our government and work together for peace and stability."

Nujoma is to be sworn into office on independence day by United Nations Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar. Namibia's South African administrator Louis Pienaar will continue to be in charge of the territory until then.

South Africa, which has ruled Namibia since 1915, has agreed to grant the territory independence under a regional peace accord signed in 1988 with Angola and Cuba.

More than 6,000 UN military and civilian personnel have been monitoring the transition to independence, which began last April.

Former US Presidential candidate the Rev. Jesse Jackson attended the assembly session and was given time to address the members.

"I'm impressed by people civilised enough to agree and disagree," Jackson told the assembly. "This is an example of how a democratic society can work when people move from polarisation to coalition."

Jackson, who completed an eight-day visit to



Nujoma elected to be the first President of Namibia after independence. (Reuter wirephoto)

South Africa yesterday, said Namibia could become a "shining example" of democracy for South Africa.

Jackson, who has known Nujoma for many years, told the Namibian leader that "God has rewarded you for all your suffering."

The black US civil rights leader said he would urge the US government to increase aid to Namibia and other black-ruled countries in the region.

Leifus Swapo won 41 assembly seats in elections last November and six other parties captured the remaining 31 spots.

US to cut 12,000 troops in Asia, Pacific

SEOUL, Feb 16, (AP): US Secretary of State Dick Cheney told Seoul officials that he wants to cut US forces in Asia and the Pacific by 10 to 12 per cent — at least 12,000 troops — over the next three years.

He said about 5,000 of the troops would be pulled out of South Korea and another 7,000 to 9,400 would be withdrawn from the Philippines and Japan. There are 120,000 US troops based in the three countries.

Cheney flew by helicopter along the heavily fortified border between North and South Korea today and lunched with combat-ready American troops to discuss cutbacks in US forces.

Morning fog in the rugged terrain along the

demilitarized zone delayed Cheney's helicopter tour, but the weather improved by noon and he flew 56 kilometres (35 miles) northeast of Seoul to Camp Casey, headquarters of the US 2nd infantry division.

Cheney saw dozens of tanks, bunkers and guard posts covered with camouflage, buildings painted in speckled olive-drab and brown and soldiers in full-dress battle fatigues, the standard uniform for combat-ready troops along the border between communist North Korea and the capitalist South.

Journalists were told Cheney asked to have an informal lunch with 12 non-commissioned officers "with no generals present."

Cheney explained the background of cuts in troop strength and defence spending to senior enlisted men and asked for their comments, one witness said.

There are 43,000 US troops stationed in South Korea under a mutual defence pact. US officials said yesterday about 5,000 are expected to be withdrawn in the next three years.

Cheney, who also will travel to Manila and Tokyo, said the troop cuts in South Korea would not be pushed "precipitously."

"Our commitment remains strong," Cheney told reporters yesterday.

At a meeting with South Korean President Roh

Tae-Woo yesterday, Cheney reaffirmed Washington's firm security commitment to Seoul and warned the military threat from communists North Korea "remains undiminished."

The Koreas, divided since 1945, face each other with more than 1.5 million troops deployed on both sides.

Yesterday, North Korea charged that Cheney was in the region to observe South Korean preparations for war against the North.

At a news conference at the end of talks yesterday, South Korean Defence Minister Lee Sang-Hoon said his government would give "positive consideration" to increasing its support for the US troops.

Sino-UK deal on HK not enough

BEIJING, Feb 16, (UPI): A compromise between Britain and China on a mini-constitution for Hong Kong after it reverts to Chinese rule in 1997 is unlikely to restore the territory's shattered confidence, Hong Kong negotiators said yesterday.

The assessment came as officials clarified the confusing announcement Wednesday that agreement had been reached on key disputed issues in talks on the so-called basic law, the document by which Hong Kong will be governed after 1997.

China made some concessions on the pace and form of how the territory will become more democratic, Hong Kong negotiators said, but not enough to substantially ease fears that intensified after last year's Chinese crackdown on the pro-democracy movement.

"It's a little hit of improvement bits and pieces," said Raymond Wu, a Hong Kong member of the committee drafting the mini-constitution.

"Every change is along the line of what Hong Kong people have asked for, but whatever changes (were made) will only satisfy a certain number of people to a certain degree," he said.

He also said it would take "a lot of other things" besides the basic law to restore confidence in the territory.

Britain and China had been unable to agree on the details of the basic law and have been negotiating behind the scenes before this week's round of talks, the final session on the document, concludes tomorrow.

The final draft is to be completed by the end of the five-day plenum for ratification by the Chinese government in March.

Wu told reporters the mainland-dominated group overseeing political affairs agreed to propose several amendments to the existing draft.

He said the number of directly elected seats in the territorial legislative council, known as Legco, will be increased to 20 in 1997 from 18. The figure represents 30 per cent of the legislature and is four seats short of Britain's latest proposal.

Wu said the 20 seat number was agreed without a vote by the majority of drafters. Asked whether there were proposals for a higher number of directly elected seats, Wu said, "No — because that seems to be the agreement."

There has been widespread speculation that Britain and China already have hammered out the details of the basic law, and Hong Kong drafters appeared resigned to the figures handed down for a final vote.



Philippine soldiers in full battle gear watch a basketball game Feb 16. (Reuter wirephoto)



Filipino students belonging to the leftist 'Kaduna' hold anti-US placards during a demonstration in Manila on Feb 15. (Reuter wirephoto)

Abduction claim dismissed Setback for Imelda

NEW YORK, Feb 16, (UPI): A judge yesterday rejected a request to unseal secret documents that defence lawyers argued would support a claim that former Philippines First Lady Imelda Marcos and her late husband were kidnapped and brought "involuntarily" to the United States.

The ruling by US district court Judge John Keenan marked a setback for Imelda, who is seeking to get federal racketeering charges against her dismissed based on the abduction claim.

In denying the request, Keenan said defence lawyers failed to prove that classified government documents would bolster the claim that the Marcoses were kidnapped by US military forces and taken to Hawaii after Ferdinand Marcos was ousted in February 1986.

US officials yesterday warned US citizens to take "appropriate precautions" when traveling in the Philippines because of threats connected to the visit next week of Cheney.

Opposition Senator Juan Ponce Enrile said, however, that Aquino "should not have precipitated and publicly stated she would not meet with (Cheney). After all, this man is representing her counterpart in the United States."

US officials yesterday warned US citizens to take "appropriate precautions" when traveling in the Philippines because of threats connected to the visit next week of Cheney.

The advisory also urged US citizens not to travel to the central island of Samar, the provinces of Lanao Del Sur, Sulu and Basilan in the south and Kalanga Apaya, Catagan and Isabela in the north due to ongoing communist insurgency and criminal activity.

In other developments, police safely detonated a time bomb early today after it was found by a security guard at the entrance to the Makati Stock Exchange, officials said.

Policeman Remy Macaspac said the guard found the device at about 11 pm (1500 GMT) yesterday.

Seal Sofia ties: South Korea will establish formal diplomatic relations with Bulgaria when its

foreign minister visits Sofia next month, government officials said Friday.

Officials of both countries signed a protocol on diplomatic relations in Sofia on Thursday and agreed to establish formal diplomatic ties next month, they said.

South Korea approved a similar protocol with Czechoslovakia last month.

South Korean Foreign Minister Choi Ho-Joong plans to visit Sofia and Prague in mid-March to sign formal agreements to open relations with the two European countries. (AP)

Queen heads home: Queen Elizabeth II and her husband, the Duke of Edinburgh, flew out of New Zealand on Friday after a 16-day visit.

Governor General Sir Paul Keating, Prime Minister Geoffrey Palmer and a number of cabinet ministers were among those who gathered on the tarmac at Christchurch airport to farewell the royal couple.

Before entering the British Airways plane for the journey to London, the Queen, dressed in royal blue, turned and waved to a small crowd lining the airport viewing deck. (AP)

Malaysia won't apologise: Malaysia will not apologise to the world for laws that require the hanging of drug traffickers, Deputy Prime Minister Ghafar Baba said Thursday.

He said Kuala Lumpur also would not protest if other countries imposed similar sentences on Malaysians found guilty of trafficking abroad.

"We want the world to know about our firm stand. We do not need to apologise for having laws providing hanging to drug traffickers," he told a news conference.

"(US) President (George) Bush himself is now talking about hanging offenders. Some countries, out of the United States, have criticised us for hanging their people. We do not hang our people... we hang those who traffic in drugs. We don't care where they come from," he said.

All 25 candidates had been held since Feb 8. Most are members of the leading opposition group, the National League for Democracy, according to the diplomats, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

They said the candidates were all running in the May 27 election, which will be the first multiparty vote in Rangoon.

It was not clear for how long the candidates would be detained, or what charges they faced, if any, said the diplomats, reached by telephone from Bangkok. All the detained candidates were running for office in Rangoon.



Jackson meets Mandela

US Civil Rights leader Jesse Jackson met Nelson Mandela on Thursday and said the national hero's relationship with South Africa's president was crucial to the country's future.

"I think President De Klerk and Nelson Mandela have started a relationship which could be the key," he said.

Jackson (second from left) met Mandela for 45 minutes at the tiny home in the black township of Soweto where Mandela has decided to live since being freed from 27 years in jail on Sunday.

"I wish Martin Luther King could have been here for this moment," Jackson said, referring to the legendary civil

rights campaigner.

De Klerk's decision to free Mandela is aimed at breaking the political deadlock between South Africa's white minority and the disenfranchised black majority.

Mandela said on Thursday he had never seen a facsimile machine and would like to have a look at one.

Jackson said Mandela was gently criticising media reports saying he enjoyed a luxurious life in the last months of imprisonment, including the use of modern communications devices such as fax machine.

Shown with Jackson and Mandela are their wives Winnie and Jacky (extreme right). (Reuter wirephoto)

ANC-Pretoria dialogue soon

Klerk asked to quit

LUSAKA, Feb 16. (Agencies): The African National Congress, fighting for black majority rule in South Africa, said today it would soon meet President F.W. de Klerk to help create a climate for negotiations.

ANC leaders ended three days of strategy talks, called after De Klerk freed their leader Nelson Mandela from 27 years' jail last Sunday.

The ANC, legalised by De Klerk this month after 30 years in exile in Zambia, said it recognised reforms announced by Pretoria but they had not gone far enough.

The ANC called on Pretoria to release all political prisoners, end a three-year-old state of emergency, repeal repressive legislation, ban political trials and remove troops from black townships.

It said it planned to send a delegation to meet De Klerk as soon as possible, comprising leaders from the Lusaka-based national executive committee as well as those based inside South Africa.

It would be the first meeting between the guerrilla movement's exiled leaders and a South African head of state. No date for the meeting was announced.

The ANC also said it would open offices in South Africa. There was no immediate comment from De Klerk's office.

The opposition Conservative Party charged today that De Klerk was spreading fear among whites with his plans to share power with blacks and called for his immediate resignation.

The right-wing party issued the call after thousands of its supporters marched through Pretoria last night in a major show of strength to demand new elections. Police said today up to 40,000 whites took part in the march.

De Klerk's decision to free black leader Nelson Mandela and legalise the African National Congress guerrilla movement has created fear and uncertainty among South African whites, the Conservative Party said in a statement in its newspaper, Die Patriot.

"With one stroke, great uncertainty about the future has been created. The whites have been lied to too often," the statement said.

"Hang F.W. de Klerk" and "keep South Africa white," said placards carried by protesters as they marched to city hall for a rally at which party leader Andries Treurnicht warned that the government faces a growing white backlash.

De Klerk had betrayed whites "by granting people with revolutionary aims, and who want to enslave others by means of violence, freedom of movement and the right to organise," Treurnicht told the cheering crowd.

The march and rally kicked off the conservatives' campaign to try for force elections to oust De Klerk for freeing Mandela.

Mandela today urged the international community to press South Africa to lift a three-year-old state of emergency and release all political prisoners.

The ANC leader made his call in an hour-long closed meeting, his first with ambassador and senior diplomat of some 20 countries represented in South Africa.

Mandela told reporters after the meeting at a hotel outside Johannesburg that ANC policy demanded all countries break off relations with South Africa in protest against apartheid. But those who chose to remain had a role to play.

"Now they are here, they can do the work of trying to help to normalise the political situation in the country," he said.

Diplomats quoted him as saying they should urge Pretoria to lift emergency rule, which gives sweeping powers to police, and more particularly to secure release of all political prisoners.

Answering reporters' questions, Mandela said he had also appealed to the diplomats to ask their governments to intensify economic sanctions against South Africa.

Mandela said the foundations were almost in place for negotiations between his ANC and South African government.

■ Mercedes-Benz workers have got permission to build Mandela a luxury saloon car — painted red — to show their admiration for the freed South African black leader.

Co-operate to prevent airlines bombings: US

PARIS, Feb 16. (AP): A US presidential panel urged closer Western co-operation yesterday to prevent airliner bombings and called for a tough response to nations sponsoring such attacks.

Ann McLaughlin, former US labour secretary and head of the commission, said at a news conference, a "common purpose exists to combat terrorism" and urged for more sharing of information to protect the travelling public.

US President George Bush created the commission on aviation, security and terrorism last August as a result of the Dec. 21, 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland.

The seven-member panel is travelling through Europe to sound out anti-terrorism policies. The panel arrived in

Call to keep curbs on SA

ADDIS ABABA, Feb 16. (Agencies): The Organisation of African Unity urged government today to maintain economic sanctions against South Africa as pressure on Pretoria to scrap apartheid as well as those based inside South Africa.

Health OK: Mandela

'Top job an honour'

SOWETO, Feb 16. (UPI): Black leader Nelson Mandela said yesterday he would be honoured to become president in a post-apartheid South Africa but that his ambition was only to bring peace to the country.

In his second day of interviews since his release on Sunday, the silver-haired Mandela, 71, also conceded he was showing "signs of wear and tear." But he described his health as "reasonably good" and said he was carrying on with his prison life exercise routine.

"My health is reasonably good, but of course I'm not as young as you, and there are signs of old age, you know, signs of wear and tear," he said. "But subject to that, I'm carrying on with my exercises and I am enjoying them," he told reporters.

Mandela fielded 26 questions during the 30-minute interview in the front yard of his Soweto home shortly after a meeting with civil rights leader Jesse Jackson.

"Hang F.W. de Klerk" and "keep South Africa white," said placards carried by protesters as they marched to city hall for a rally at which party leader Andries Treurnicht warned that the government faces a growing white backlash.

De Klerk had betrayed whites "by granting people with revolutionary aims, and who want to enslave others by means of violence, freedom of movement and the right to organise," Treurnicht told the cheering crowd.

The march and rally kicked off the conservatives' campaign to try for force elections to oust De Klerk for freeing Mandela.

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Poland gets a bitter pill

Modrow in Warsaw talks on German unification

WARSAW, Feb 16. (Agencies): The prime ministers of Poland and East Germany opened talks today on German unification amid reports the United States and West Germany rejected Poland's request to join proposed talks on the subject.

East German Prime Minister Hans Modrow arrived on a one-day working visit and immediately started talks with his Polish counterpart, Tadeusz Mazowiecki.

The government newspaper Rzecznik Polityki said Mazowiecki will also raise the problem of the restriction of Poles travelling in East Germany and harassment of Polish tourists in that country.

A Polish government source said Modrow will support Warsaw's effort to be included in proposed talks among World War II visitors — the Soviet Union, the United States,

Britain and France — and the two German states.

But the Solidarity newspaper Gazeta Wyborcza said Washington "rejected Poland's proposal in an elegant way" to discourage Mazowiecki before his trip to the United States in March.

The armed forces newspaper Zolnierz Wolnosci said the rejection was a "bitter pill" for Poland.

"For the second time in history, someone else will decide about us without us," it said in reference to the 1945 Potsdam agreement that fixed European borders following the end of World War II.

Poland lost six million people during World War II and suffered the most ruinous of

NEWS IN BRIEF

JACUZZI

Jacuzzi gives woman huge lovebite: A Swedish woman who got stuck in a Jacuzzi's suction system on Thursday was taken to hospital — with back pains and a huge "lovebite" on her bottom.

Physician Jan Wellander said the shocked woman had not been able to break loose from the suction system in the public Jacuzzi until it was turned off.

He said the Jacuzzi had given her a suction mark measuring 20 by 30 cm (eight by 12 inches). He urged other Jacuzzi bathers to be careful.

"It was the biggest lovebite I've ever seen," he said. (Reuters)

Dutch magazine banned: A popular Dutch magazine which told its readers they could print their own money easily on colour copying machines was banned by a court on Thursday.

"We'll have to withdraw all copies in 48 hours or face fines of 50,000 to 500,000 guilders (\$25,000 to 250,000)," Aktuel magazine editor Pieter de Vries said after the court ruling.

The Dutch central bank sought the court order, saying the weekly magazine's disclosure was against the public interest and gave detailed information on how to forge money. (Reuters)

26 million Soviet died in WW II: A senior Kremlin official said yesterday that more than 26 million Soviet people died in World War Two, six million more than previously assumed, but Moscow had never made the figure public.

Soviet dead during the war had previously been put at around 20 million. Hitler's armies invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, and the country suffered heavier casualties than any other.

Vladimir Falin, an adviser to President Mikhail Gorbachev and member of the Supreme Soviet parliament, told a meeting in Brussels that 26,340,000 Soviet citizens died during the war. (Reuters)

West German Finance Minister Theo Waigel had earlier dismissed Modrow's and his ministerial delegation as "transitional government with no free range for negotiating."

East Germany firmly rejected yesterday the idea that monetary union with West Germany was imminent, saying anyone suggesting this was deceiving the public.

Briefing journalists the day after Modrow's return from talks in Bonn, government spokesman Wolfgang Meyer said a hasty approach to German unification could be disastrous for East Germany and Europe as a whole.

Mazowiecki described his first session with Modrow as "fruitful," the official PAP news agency reported.

Both speakers in an open way expressed their views on the subject of the process which in the last few months has been developing and is leading to the reunification of Germany," Mazowiecki told PAP.

This process has to take into consideration the "full security of the rights of German neighbours," Mazowiecki said.

Poland doesn't have to take part in everything but it has to take part in everything that concerns Poland, it has to be present," he added, according to the PAP report.

Sessions were also planned with President Wojciech Jaruzelski, and Modrow was to address the foreign affairs committees of the two houses of parliament.

The European Economic Community said today it would hold a special summit in April to discuss problems of German unification.

"It is necessary to maintain continuing sanctions against the Pretoria government until the democratic reforms that African freedom fighter Mandela wants are achieved," said Boutros Ghali, Egypt's minister of state for foreign affairs.

Japan will not relax economic sanctions against South Africa despite a request to do so from Thatcher, the Foreign Ministry said today.

A spokesman said Thatcher had sent a letter to Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu earlier this week.

President George Bush can lift US sanctions on trade with South Africa only with the approval of Congress, which he is not likely to get at this time. But there is a question how much difference the sanctions have made.

Herman Cahn, assistant secretary of State for Africa, said that "the legislation we're working under provides for relaxation of sanctions when there is progress. I think we're rapidly reaching that point, but we're not going to make any decisions until we've consulted very closely with the Congress..."

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National Day celebrations officially begin today

Flag hoisting at Green Island

KUWAIT, Feb 16, (Kuna): The country's celebrations of the 25th National Day Anniversary will begin Saturday, Feb 17, with the hoisting of the flag in the Green Island at the sea-front.

Assistant secretary for external information and secretary of the standing committee for celebration of national occasions Ridha Al Faifi said the hoisting of the flag would take place amid official and popular celebrations with the participation of government units and folklore troupes.

Faifi said rescue teams, fire brigades and coast guards would organise marine shows on the occasion.

Recalling statements by Information

Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al Hamad Al Sabah, Faifi reiterated that participation of the citizens in the National Day celebration is the most important factor in observing the occasion.

Faifi said the committee had prepared quantities of photos of HH the Amir and HH Crown Prince and Premier in addition to posters and flags for distribution to the public.

Exhibition

Meanwhile, the Embassy of Kuwait in Brazil inaugurated a week-long exhibition to mirror the Kuwaiti civilisation in particular and the Arabs' in general to

people living in the country.

Minister of culture in the Brazilian Goias state, where the exhibition is currently taking place, said such a cultural event is a unique civilised phenomenon, attracting hundreds of Brazilians to get acquainted with the Arab and Kuwaiti traditions.

She stressed that the Arab civilisation played a prominent role in the maturity of the world's civilisation in general and in Brazil in particular.

The Brazilian minister also highlighted the co-operative spirit of the Arab immigrants who enriched Brazilian civilisation.

For his part, Kuwaiti Ambassador to

Brazil, Faisal Al Gais, said the show is a salute of friendship from the people of Kuwait to the Brazilian people.

Friendship

The ambassador also spoke about development of Kuwaiti culture and art as well as the role of cultural communication in enhancing friendship and peace among people of the world.

The exhibition, the first of its kind in Latin America, consists of 30 paintings of three prominent Kuwaiti artists, besides pictures and drawings reflecting Kuwait in the past and present.

As part of activities and events designed to celebrate Kuwait's 25th National

Day, a special exhibition on architectural designs from the Mamluk period in Jerusalem was opened here Wednesday.

The exhibition is co-organised by the British Council and the Islamic Artifacts Society (IAC) and is now open for public display at the society's headquarters in Kuwait City.

Many specialists and officials attended the inauguration ceremony which was addressed by the chairman of the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fisheries Sheikh Ibrahim Al Duaij and the Director of IAC Sheikha Hissa Sabah Al-Sabah.

Kuwait National Day will be observed on the 25th of this month.

Kuwaiti orphanage for Afghan children

Foundation stone laid

ISLAMABAD, Feb 16, (Kuna): Governor of North West Frontier Province Amir Gulistan Janjua laid the foundation stone of a Kuwaiti-sponsored project of an orphanage for Afghan refugees in Peshawar yesterday morning.

In his speech before a large distinguished gathering at the project site, 12 kilometres from Peshawar city, he thanked the government and the people of Kuwait for taking care of Afghan refugees in an elaborate manner.

Janjua said by financing the Rs 2.5 million orphanage project Kuwait had performed a "noble and sacred act." He noted that Kuwait had been continuously supporting the cause of the Afghan people from the very beginning.

The NWFP governor said that both the rulers and the people of Kuwait were true followers of Islamic teachings, especially in their compassion for Muslim people in misery.

This project, aimed at the welfare of orphans of Afghan mujahideen, was a shining example of their practical love for the Muslim people, he said.

Kuwait-based Lajnat Al Dawa Al Islamiyah has launched the project, through its regional office in Peshawar, spread over an area of 17,000 square metres on the grand trunk road en route to Islamabad. The orphanage will accommodate 500 orphans. A provision has been kept for future expansion to accommodate 300 more orphans.

Representatives

Due for completion in 1992, the orphanage named 'Kuwait Al Khair Orphanage', will, among others, have a block for classrooms and a block for carpentry, tailoring, shoe-making, plumbing, mechanical and technical training besides playgrounds, hostels and administrative block.

Prominent among those who attended the ceremony held at the project site near Nasirpur Colony in the outskirts of Peshawar city were president of Afghan mujahideen interim government Professor Shaghatullah Mujaddadi, Kuwait Ambassador in Pakistan Qasim Omer Al Yaqout, Yemen Ambassador in Pakistan, other Arab diplomats and representatives of United Nations agencies located in Peshawar.

Also present was a group of officials from Kuwait led by Abdul Qadir Al Ajeeb, director of Kuwait-based Baitul Zakat which made a substantial contribution in financing the project through Lajnat Al Dawa Al Islamiyah (Society of Social Reform).

Speaking on the occasion, Professor Mujaddadi lauded the people of Kuwait "for supporting the Afghan jihad from the very beginning."

"I thank the Kuwaitis for this solid support to Afghan mujahideen," said the Afghan leader, noting that besides this orphanage, Kuwait had set up various other welfare projects in Pakistan for Afghan refugees and mujahideen. These fields included education and vocational training, he said.

The orphans, Prof. Mujaddadi told the distinguished gathering, were the sons of those Afghan mujahideen who fell while fighting a super-power on their soil.

Sheikh Zahid, the regional manager of Lajnat Al Dawa Al Islamiyah, based in Peshawar, in his introductory address, said: "We are constructing this project for sheltering orphans of our Afghan brothers who sacrificed their lives. It is our modest contribution towards supporting the Islamic cause. No doubt the problem of Afghanistan is the problem of all the Muslims of the world. We should not leave them alone especially at this time."

Welfare

The Lajnat representative further said: "These orphans are our children. Their fathers laid down their lives because of us. Afghans were defending Islam on their land on behalf of Islamic Ummah. These orphans are the future of the Ummah and they must be protected and looked after well," said Sheikh Zahid.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, Dr Mohammed Saleem, chairman of the Pakistani 'Dawaatul Islami Trust Peshawar,' said Kuwait was the leading Islamic state which had done comprehensive work for the well-being and welfare of Afghan refugees and mujahideen in the North West Frontier Province. The Kuwaitis, he said, had established projects like clinics, hospitals, vocational centres, educational institutions and primary healthcare units for Afghan refugees.

"In this way the Kuwaitis are preparing Afghan manpower for the post-independence period," said Dr Saleem, whose trust is collaborating locally with Lajnat in the execution of the project.

Spate of thefts in Qurain: residents

A NUMBER of Qurain residents have called upon officials to take the necessary measures to prevent incidents of theft in the area.

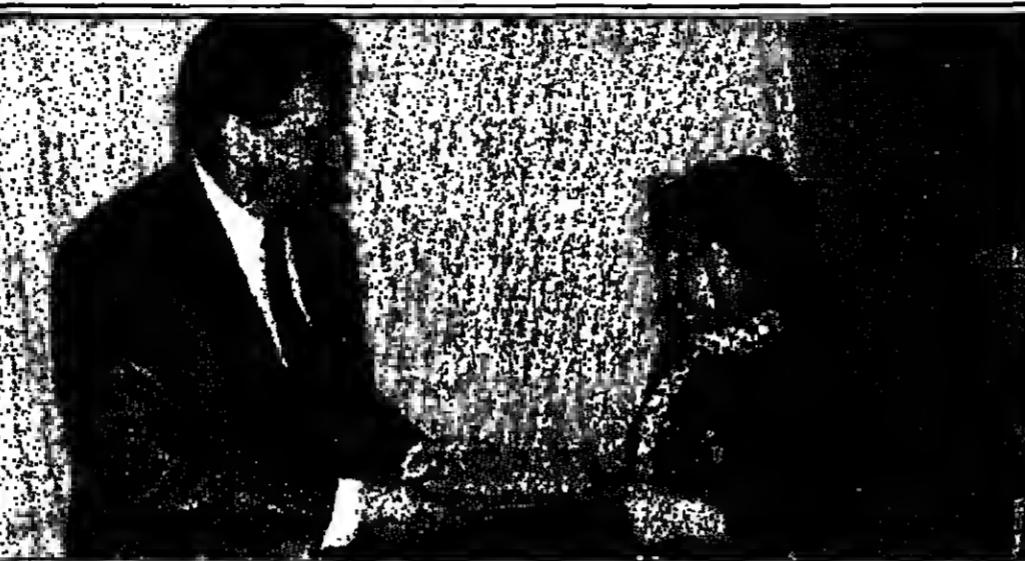
Abdul Ghani Al Mwaili's house was robbed during the afternoon. He came to his house that day and was surprised to see his living room entrance broken. He added that when he got to his bedroom he found his safe wide open and all his papers on the floor, in addition to some blood spots.

He was lucky that his money was not stolen because it was hidden somewhere else. He is sure that the robber watched them until they left the house and used the back fence of the house to get inside. He stated that it is hard to notice such suspicious moves because the area is full of Asian labourers.

He said that one of the officials informed him that there are only four security patrols in the area. He said the area requires stronger security patrolling during late night hours.

Adnan Saleeb Al Swaisan called upon the Ministry of Interior to intensify its security patrols in the area and demanded contracting companies in the area to control their labourers and to send the extra manpower back to their countries. He stated that the responsibility is shared evenly between companies and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he said.

Tamak indicated that most Qurain internal roads lack adequate lighting adding that the area also lacks telephone services. He called upon officials



Palestinian children's appeal

Palestinian children in Kuwait on Thursday appealed to the Soviet Union, China and France to do their utmost to check the mass exodus of Soviet Jews to Israel and prevent Israel from settling the immigrants in occupied Arab territories.

The plea came in memos they delivered today to the embassies of the three countries.

The memo noted that the freedom cause was inseparable, stressed that the Palestinians have the right to return and that no one else was entitled to settle in their homeland under circumstances of occupation.

"The most dangerous thing about the emigration of Soviet Jews is that it comes within the framework of perestroika (reconstruction) and under the US umbrella of man's freedom at a time it closed its doors in front of Jewish immigrants to force them to head to occupied Palestine," read the memo.

It urged the three countries to exert every possible effort to spur peace process and put pressure on Israel to withdraw from occupied Arab territories, recognising Palestinian national rights and stop atrocities against Palestinian people inside the occupied land. Picture shows Soviet Ambassador Ernest Zverev receiving the memo.

Ernest Zverev receiving the memo.

Thais step up search for missing Saudi

Newspaper closed for inflammatory headline

BANGKOK, Feb 16, (Agencies): Police in Thailand expanded their search Thursday for a missing Saudi Arabian businessman whose disappearance followed the murders of three Saudi embassy officials earlier this month.

Police found the empty car of Mohammad Al Ruwayli in the parking lot of a local hospital on Thursday but there was no sign of him. They said the car had been there for three days.

They said Ruwayli, a partner in a company sending Thais to work in Saudi Arabia, disappeared on Monday shortly after telling his wife by telephone he was leaving his office for home.

The Thai media have speculated that a labour racket was behind the murders as the three slain Saudis were partly responsible for processing visas of Thai workers going to Saudi Arabia.

He said local newspapers and television stations had been asked to carry a picture of the 32-year-old businessman who has lived here for at least four years.

Employment agency sources said Ruwayli also ran a business selling airline tickets to people travelling between Thailand and the Mideast.

Police said they had not determined whether the murders were politically motivated or linked to business conflicts in lucrative Saudi Arabia.

The media said the murders were the second incident possibly connected with the labour export business. A Saudi embassy official holding a related job was shot dead here in January last year and the case remained unsolved.

Police said Ruwayli's Sincere International Recruitment Company was one of the several dozen job placement agencies in Thailand that specialised in sending local workers to Saudi Arabia and other Mideast countries.

Major-General Thanoo Hom-haul, deputy chief of Bangkok's

Metropolitan Police, told reporters Ruwayli's apartment was in the same central Bangkok area where one of the three Saudi embassy officials was killed by unidentified gunmen two weeks ago.

The newspaper *Naew Na* was banned Wednesday for printing what police said was a false headline on the Feb 1 killing.

National police chief Sawaeng Thirasawat said the paper would be closed indefinitely, reported Lt Col Sampan Sresithaphorn of the police department's press censorship division.

The headline was "Saudi Arabian diplomats to be arrested for ordering killings of three compatriots," which appeared in the Feb 3 edition, Sampan said.

In a statement ordering the closure, Sawaeng said the headline was irresponsible and was damaging to relations between Thailand and Saudi Arabia, he said.

It also would affect the safety of Thais working in Saudi Arabia, he said.

Naew Na could appear against the ban, he said.

Aryus Prateep Na Thalang, news editor of *Naew Na*, said the paper already had lodged an appeal.

"We are sure we can fight this because there are laws and a democratic government," he said.

The article accompanying the headline said the killings resulted from a conflict between Saudi diplomats who were cashing in on the export of Thai labour to the Middle East.

Naew Na, founded in 1980, has a daily circulation of 700,000 and a staff of 200, Aryus said.

Eritrean official warns of anti-Arab pact

KUWAIT, Feb 16, (Kuna): An anti-Arab, Eritrean-Israeli pact is in the making and Arabs should take urgent action to counter it, warned the senior Eritrean official in a statement.

Israel and Ethiopia, which restored diplomatic relations late last year, are co-operating on more levels than one, with Israel seeking access to strategic Red Sea ports, according to executive committee member of the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) Mohammed Ali Labbab.

The Eritrean official was quoted by Kuwaiti daily Al Sevassa as saying Israel would supply Ethiopia with \$700 million and cluster bombs in exchange for the right to use the Ethiopian Red Sea island of Dahlak, opposite the Saudi and Yemeni coasts.

Control over the island would give Israel strategic command on the Red Sea shipping route, he warned.

He said Israeli military personnel had already set up eavesdropping equipment and naval installations on the Dahlak island.

The Eritrean officials would not rule out that Israel might deploy missile batteries on the island to threaten oilfields in the Arab Gulf area.

Under the same deal, the Ethiopian government would allow more Ethiopian Jews (Falashas) to migrate to the Jewish state, almost certainly to be resettled in Arab territories occupied by Israel.

Labbab confirmed earlier reports that Israeli experts were helping Ethiopia in studies on possible diversion of the Blue Nile, a major tributary that feeds the river Nile, which streams down to Sudan and Egypt.

Labbab said some 400 Israeli experts had replaced as many East German specialists working in Ethiopia in part of the growing co-operation between the two sides.

Action Line

MY WIFE has been working in a company on visa No. 18. She is not willing to work. Is it possible to change her residence to my sponsorship — that is get visa No. 22? If yes, what documents do I require and which ministry must be approached?

Amjad Khan

IF YOU are eligible under the salary requirements rules and earn KD650 in the private sector and KD450 in the public sector, then you can sponsor your wife. For this, you'll have to cancel the visa No. 18, send her back to your country and call her on the fresh dependent visa.

If you can sponsor her, under the rules, you'll have to submit an attested copy of the marriage certificate, a copy of her passport and photographs and a salary certificate, recently issued by your employer, to the immigration department. If the application meets the regulations, a visa No. 22 may be granted by the immigration authorities.

I AM contract worker (domestic helper). I have been working with my employer for three years and four months. Am I entitled to get two months vacation and my plane ticket? In case my employer doesn't give them, can I claim them? My employer said they would give me my benefits in January but they didn't. I'm planning to take my vacation four months before my contract finishes. Please advise.

T.S.B.

IF YOU have a contract, it must be followed, and you are entitled to get your benefits according to the contract. Vacation, plane ticket and other benefits must have been included in the contract. The matter must be dealt with according to the contract. As you must be aware, domestic helpers are not covered by the private sector labour. They come under the civil law. If the employer has not paid you, and the payment has been mentioned in the contract, you can file a case in the civil court to claim your rights.

I AM an Indian married to a Filipino in Kuwait. My wife was living in Kuwait on a domestic visa. After our marriage, her visa was cancelled and I sent her to India. My wife has been living in India. She holds Filipino nationality. I would like to bring her back to Kuwait on a work visa No. 18. Do I have to send her to the Philippines to complete the formalities? Can I bring her to Kuwait from India?

Michael

NORMALLY, work visa formalities must be completed in the country of origin. If you obtain a no objection certificate for her then the normal procedure is that the immigration authorities inform the Kuwait Embassy in the country of origin, where the formalities are to be completed. She'll have to return to the Philippines to endorse papers. I suggest you make enquiries with the authorities to find out if there are any other possibilities.

THANKS for your kind and humanitarian services toward the expatriates by answering queries through your columns, to which we are all indebted.

Many people came to Kuwait some decades ago and since then, they have been staying here with their families. Their children were born here, brought up and educated here. These senior expatriates have maintained excellent moral character and working records.

One question disturbs my mind. I notice that on the issue of iqamas, both the senior and the junior expatriates are treated at the same level. Both can be exposed to similar punishment in the event of delays in renewing iqamas due to unforeseen circumstances beyond their control.

I understand that it should apply to new candidates but fail to understand why it is done to senior expatriates. Expatriates who have been staying for three decades or more, I feel, deserve a certain flexibility of rules from a government that enjoys a reputation for its humanitarian services.

Please look into the matter so that we senior expatriates are taken care of and justified in the light of your good offices.

F.F. Zaki

YOUR letter was addressed to the Legal Clinic. I went through it and did not find any specific query. You are commenting on the law, which has to be applied across the board! That, I feel, is the purpose of the law. There cannot be one law for one section of expatriates and another for another. If there is any specific query, any doubts about the law or you need a clarification, I'd be happy to answer your question.

I WOULD like to know if it is possible to bring my mother to Kuwait as my dependent. My father recently passed away. If it is possible, please advise me of the procedures that should be followed, what is the salary requirement and whether it is possible to combine my husband's as well my salary to meet salary requirement

Kuwait actively participates in Expolangues

Computerised system for Arabic displayed

PARIS, Feb 16, (Kuna): For the second consecutive year Kuwait is taking part in the international exhibition of languages, cultures, communications and publishing (Expolangues) held in Paris from 14 to 19 February.

In that forum aimed at bringing together richness of the world's different languages and cultures, high level linguistic research programmes and pedagogical methods, Kuwait together with Morocco

represented the Arab world.

The exhibition was inaugurated Wednesday by the Minister of State for National Education, Research and Sports, Lionel Jospin, who visited the Kuwaiti stand and was received by the cultural attaché in Paris, Abdul Latif Al Bajani.

Jospin expressed his pleasure to see that Kuwait was actively participating in that annual exhibition, and the same satisfaction was voiced by Thierry de Beaucé.

This year, he went on, Kuwait has more junior minister in charge of international relations at the Foreign Ministry, who followed the state minister at the Kuwaiti stand.

System

Bajani said that the information and higher education ministries and the University of Kuwait have helped staff at the Kuwaiti Cultural Bureau in Paris organise the exhibition.

This year, he went on, Kuwait has more

books displayed, notably concerning Arab civilisation and culture, methods of teaching and learning Arabic, and a computerised system to learn Arabic.

There are a total of 250 participants at this 8th expolangues exhibition, representing some 30 countries with about 60 different languages.

Organisers are expecting about 40,000 visitors this year, compared with between 30,000 and 35,000 in 1989.



A lab assistant checks the purity of Perrier at a food inspection department in Rotterdam.

Yuppie tipple hits troubled times

Eau Perrier!

By Jadranka Porter
Arab Times staff

KUWAIT pulled the fizzy Perrier mineral water from all stores and restaurants Thursday while Health Ministry laboratories began tests to determine whether supplies to Kuwait had been contaminated.

The move comes after the French company announced Wednesday it was withdrawing its familiar green bottles from markets around the world after the discovery of contamination by a toxic solvent.

While Kuwait Municipality inspectors were making rounds of the supermarkets last week the Health Ministry appealed to international organisations for help. Inquiries were sent to the World Health Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organisation and the US Food and Drug Administration. Dr Abdul Rahman Al Awadi, the planning minister and acting minister of health, has said.

Co-operative societies report that they withdrew the water from shelves before the worldwide recall saying that sales dropped dramatically after the first press reports about contamination in the US.

The Sultan Center in Salma, one of the most popular food court outlets in Kuwait, which used to sell some 30 cases of Perrier a day, removed the water from its shelves Thursday after being instructed to do so by the Perrier agent and the municipality.

The supermarket, which is now stuck with a stock of between 100 and 175 cases, said Perrier was among the most popular drinks on its shelves.

Raad Stores, the Perrier importers, was not available for comment during the weekend. The Safeway store in Farwaniya confirmed it withdrew the water from the supermarket after a visit by municipality officials.

The Kuwait Meridien, which belongs to the French chain of hotels, also stopped serving Perrier Thursday according to its food and beverage manager who declined any further comment. But another Meridien manager said Perrier was not the hotel's guests' favourite drink. Plain mineral water and fresh fruit juices, he said, were by far more popular.

The Perrier health scare snowballed after small traces of benzene were found in bottles in the US state of North Carolina prompting Perrier to withdraw the water from stores across the US on Feb 9. The recall was extended Wednesday to the rest of the world after reports of contamination in Europe. Announcing the recall at a news conference in Paris, Perrier top executives said it was caused by small amounts of a toxic gas that by mistake passed through a dirty filter contaminating some bottles.

Purified Perrier gushes back

VERGEZE, France, Feb 16, (Reuters): Pure Perrier gushed back yesterday at the rate of six million bottles a day when its makers rushed to replenish stocks wiped out by a health scare and a global recall.

While Perrier's shares sparked back up on the Paris Stock Exchange, its 3,500 staff at the sacred mineral water source near this southern French town were working at full capacity to replace the 160 million bottles withdrawn from world markets.

"We hope to turn a near catastrophe into a great success," said Perrier spokesman Jean-Pierre Roux. The decision to withdraw all suspect Perrier bottles was "the best demonstration of our credibility that we could have made."

Besides reassuring investors, the move calmed workers in this company town, which locals said would be ruined should disaster strike its main employer.

"Seeing we're producing at full capacity has been the best reassurance for the personnel. Now they're taking on the challenge," Roux said.

The image of purity is everything for Perrier, which broke into the United States and created its biggest export market, wooing the chic, health-conscious and upwardly mobile.

US sales soared from \$51 million in 1981 to \$550 million in 1988. Today, Perrier litre for litre can fetch five times more than gasoline.

Roux, the company's human relations director, said some employees now faced dismissal for neglecting to clean the filters that purify the gas in Perrier. All recalled supplies would be destroyed, including bottles, he said.

Since Roman times, the bubbling spring in the flat, dry Mediterranean land between the cities of Nimes and Montpellier was known as a source of naturally effervescent water.

In an ultra-modern plant, the gas, which emanates from deep volcanic layers and percolates through an underground stream, is separated, filtered to remove impurities, then reinjected into the Perrier at a ratio of 3.5 parts gas to one part water.

When filters were not renewed, tiny traces of benzene built up, eventually creating levels that exceed US Food and Drug Administration safety norms, although the FDA itself said there was no immediate health risk.

Benzene is a naturally occurring solvent which is suspected of causing cancer.

Perrier was withdrawn from markets in the United States, Canada, Japan, West Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands before company chairman Gustave Leven, 75, ordered the total recall.

The only exception to Wednesday's recall order was France where Leven said bottles would only be replaced on demand since the contaminated water still met French safety standards.

But the company backtracked yesterday after government ministers made clear they felt French consumers should be just as well protected as American ones.

The French buy 42 per cent of the one billion bottles sold in some 120 countries every year.

Perrier, a spring blessed by the state since 1863, was bought by Leven from Britain's aristocratic Harmsworth family in 1948, and was then on the brink of bankruptcy.

Perrier now not only taps the water but also makes the distinctive pear-shaped green bottles and the caps and labels that go on them. Roux said these may be altered to show a "clear" sign to show that the water had been bottled after the recall.



Perrier chairman Gustave Leven seen moments prior to announcing world-wide withdrawal of contaminated bottles.

Distribution should return to normal throughout most of the world within 2-12 months, Zimmer said, with the new bottles showing the date when they were filled.

Computer-controlled instruments will measure Benzene in the water to prevent any recurrence of the contamination, he said.

Benzene, a chemical used in cleaning solvents, entered the water in trace amounts when workers failed to change a pipe filter at Perrier's natural spring in Vergeze in southern France.

The water and the natural carbon dioxide gas that makes it bubbly are normally separated underground then carried up separate pipes to the bottling facility, Zimmer said.

A filter on the gas pipe that cleans out Benzene and other impurities had not been changed in "several months," Zimmer said, malfunctioning and allowing naturally-occurring Benzene to seep through.

"We don't know exactly how long the filter had been there, that's the problem," said Zimmer. "It was complete negligence."

Zimmer ruled out industrial espionage and said disciplinary action had been taken against the workers involved.

Toxicologists from the university of Clermont-Ferrand said that the amount of benzene found in samples it tested would pose a cancer threat only if consumers drank a little per day for life.

The samples exceeded US standards of 5 parts per billion and European standards of 10 parts per billion, Zimmer said.

French distributors will decide on their own whether to pull their Perrier off the shelves and ask the company for fresh shipments, Leven said.

"The water still tastes good," he said after the conference.

Earlier Wednesday, the water's Dutch importer, Hero Nederland BV, recalled more than a million bottles in the Netherlands.

"Small traces of the stuff, to the extent of about 10 parts per billion, have been found in several samples," tested there in recent days, Managing Director Herman Schieffers said.

In Denmark, traces of benzene were found Tuesday in several Perrier bottles, prompting the importer, Peter Heering, and the distributor, Albani Breweries, to withdraw up to 300,000 bottles, Hearing said.

About 72 million bottles of Perrier were withdrawn from the US market last week after benzene was detected in tests by the US Food and Drug Administration.

One of two Dilmun seals discovered at Saar shows two people sitting on stools drinking through straws from a pot.

books displayed, notably concerning Arab civilisation and culture, methods of teaching and learning Arabic, and a computerised system to learn Arabic.

There are a total of 250 participants at this 8th expolangues exhibition, representing some 30 countries with about 60 different languages.

Organisers are expecting about 40,000 visitors this year, compared with between 30,000 and 35,000 in 1989.

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EDITORIALS

ARAB TIMES

Thought for today

A MAN is not old until regrets take the place of dreams
— John Barrymore US actor (1882-1942).

Najibullah tightens grip

Peace elusive as ever before

KABUL, (Reuters): A year after Soviet troops pulled out of Afghanistan, peace for the battered country of 18 million people remains as elusive as ever.

Defying the predictions of Western analysts, President Najibullah has strengthened his grip on power since the last of the Soviet soldiers supporting him left the country on Feb 15 last year.

But the war against US-backed Muslim rebels rages on, leaving the economy in tatters and frustrating any effort to repair the devastation caused by 11 years of fighting.

"I am not optimistic the war will end soon even if the superpowers agree to stop supplying arms to the belligerents," said one foreign diplomat in Kabul.

Diplomats say neither side is strong enough to win on the battlefield.

The government has remained on the defensive since the Soviet pullout, battling to protect key towns from rebels attacks. But the rebels, attempting to switch from commando tactics to conventional warfare, have suffered major setbacks.

Beaten

"Under the present correlation of forces, the government cannot be beaten militarily," another diplomat said.

Kabul has repeatedly proposed a ceasefire, United Nations-supervised elections and a demilitarisation of Afghanistan as the only way to end the conflict.

But the rebels have publicly refused to negotiate with a government that they hold responsible for the deaths of more than one million people and the exile of five million others.

Najibullah renewed his offer of a truce on Wednesday in a televised address to mark the first anniversary of the Soviet pullout.

The rebels fired five rockets at Kabul on Thursday in an apparent rejection of the proposal.

Najibullah's offer coincided with a call by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze for the demilitarisation of Afghanistan and a four-power peace conference.

Shevardnadze also proposed a halt to all arms supplies to Afghanistan and a ceasefire followed by the removal of all arms stocks from the country.

An Afghan journalist, who asked not to be identified, said the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan had sown seeds of discord that were plaguing the country. "It will be a difficult task to reconcile" the two sides, the journalist said.

The war is fuelled by extensive military aid to the government from the Soviet Union, which entered Afghanistan in 1979 to prop up the faltering Marxist government, and to the rebels from the United States.

Relations

Despite improving relations between Moscow and Washington, Afghan government spokesman Mohammad Naqib said recently that the superpowers remained far from agreement on the conflict.

There is diplomatic consensus here that a deal between Moscow and Washington to halt arms supplies would benefit Kabul in the short run or, as one diplomat put it, "until their missiles and air power run dry."

But even if arms supplies cease, both sides are believed to have enough weapons stockpiled to keep the war going at the same level for at least two years.

Few regret the departure of the Soviet forces.

Naqib said there were no plans to commemorate the pullout because sending troops into Afghanistan was a mistake and "you don't celebrate mistakes."

The government is trying to win support by distancing itself from its communist past. Once a staunch proponent of Marxism-Leninism, the ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan now claims to be Islamic, nationalist and pro-democracy.

Privately, government officials also agree that the coup which brought the communists to power in 1978 was a mistake. "The timing was wrong because the people were not yet ready for socialism," a senior official said.

"Before the revolution everything was cheap and in abundance," said one government employee. "Now we have no security, no peace, no food, no nothing."

Food

In the big cities at least, there appears to be more food than last year because the winter has been relatively mild. And there have been fewer rebel interruptions of a key highway that is Kabul's main lifeline to the Soviet Union.

But in the countryside, United Nations officials report people are starving because of food shortages and a rapid decline in the purchasing power of the afghan.

The currency has plummeted to 500 to the US dollar in the bazaars from 220 one year ago. The official rate is 55 afghanis to the dollar.

The average local salary is about 3,000 afghanis a month, good for 12 kg (26.5 pounds) of rice or four kg (8.8 pounds) of mutton in the free market.

Although state workers get coupons entitling them to 50 kg (110 pounds) of rice and four kg of cooking oil every month, not all of them get their full quotas because of shortages.

They are also entitled to four kg of sugar, four bars of soap and 500 gms (1.1 pounds) of tea at subsidised prices.

In Kabul's main carpet and jewellery area, shopkeepers said business was awful. Some traders said the only good that could be said of the Soviet troops was that they had inspired Western diplomats, "our main buyers," to stay.

When the Soviet Army withdrew, the diplomats, concerned about their safety, also packed their bags and left.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1568 — Turkey's Sultan Selim II makes peace with Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian II.

1670 — France signs defensive alliance with Bavaria.

1720 — Peace treaty between Quadruple Alliance and Spain signed.

1813 — Prussia's Frederick William III declares war on France.

1852 — Repressive measures are adopted in France, including press censorship.

1897 — Britain rejects Austro-Russian proposal for blockade of Piraeus in Greece.

1916 — British and French forces complete capture of Germany's African colony of Cameroon during World War I.

1934 — Belgium's King Albert I is killed while mountain-climbing.

1936 — Anglo-Irish pact ends tariff war.

1944 — US forces attack Japanese at Eniwetok atoll in Pacific in World War II.

1965 — US spacecraft Ranger 8 is launched from Cape Kennedy, Florida, and make crash-landing on moon three days later after sending back more 7,000 pictures.

1987 — Shiite militiamen and leftist alliance of Druze and communists gunmen clash in Lebanon's West Beirut for control of capital's Muslim sector.



Strong spirit

SIR: Three hundred years back when Richard Lovelace was put into English prison cell, he wrote the following verse on the prison wall:

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage,
The spotless mind and innocent
Calls that a hermitage.
If I have freedom in my love
And in my soul I am free,
Angels alone that are above
enjoy such liberty."

Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for life for his patriotic activities but finally released after 27 years of imprisonment. During the first decade of his imprisonment, he was made to break the rocks and turn into fine gravel — what a hard labour and harsh punishment! God forbids such punishments even to worst enemies. He went to the prison as an able-bodied man, full of youth and vigour but came out of it physically shaken.

If at all he survived to see his freedom, it was only because of his strong spirit that kept him alert. Former President Botha wanted to shatter him and to turn him docile but instead his long years in prison made Mandela more mature in his political philosophy resulting in having more freedom of thoughts. This freedom finally captivated the might of his oppressors to such an extent that his prison cell turned into a conference hall for discussing out only his freedom but also to nullify the crime against humanity called — apartheid.

Punishments

There are leaders in the world who think that human movements can be crushed by making the body undergo harsh punishments but it is not always the case. In order to shut his mouth for his campaign against Czarist regime, Bakunin, the anarchist, was made to suffer worst imprisonment in the then Russia and because of such cruelty in his prison cell, he lost his teeth maiming him unfit to practice his ferocious oratory.

However, his spirit was left untouched that forced him to exercise his movement against Czarist regime by way of writings.

History is full of examples where body suffered but spirit remained intact. After all, it is said by John Milton in his Paradise Lost that "Mind is in its own place and it can make a hell into a heaven and heaven into a hell."

There is still an impression into the minds of the white-skinned people that coloured people are intellectually inferior to them. But let the inflated ego of whites be aware that early civilisation was started in Africa and coloured Asia when Europeans were still living in cages as uncivilised tribes. Secondly, anthropologists have proved that given equal opportunities, no man is inferior to the other. For example, Martin Luther King Jr., Pele, Carl Lewis, Muhammad Ali, Bishop Tutu, Mahatma Gandhi and many others proved that by destroying the fabric of white superiority.

Those who supported Mandela's imprisonment and also those who kept silent over his imprisonment and that of his likes will remain guilty not only in the eyes of humanity but also in the eyes of God.

A. Veronica Fernandes, Safat.

Help S. Africa

SIR: I am an exiled South African studying in London. My name is Shona, and I implore you to consider this letter well, for it could be important to many people.

This letter is probably going to strike you as completely naive and even idealistic, but it is the result of much frustration at not being able to serve my country better. At present this is the only way I can think of for everybody to contribute to the reform process.

But should you not be able to grant me this massive favour — I would understand, and at the same time ask another favour of you — could you not send this request on to another newspaper's editor? Whatever you decide — I think you will understand.

Now, while it is perfectly true that the change in South Africa can only be achieved internally — so is it equally as true that we can learn from the whole world. And that is what this letter is about.

Could you ask your readers to help South Africa? Doing this can be done by them answering these 3 questions:

(1) As you personally understand the situation, how did South Africa find itself in the unique position of having its policy of apartheid?

(2) What is your perception of life in South Africa today? And most importantly —

(3) What advice would you give to (a) the present government and (b) the future government?

I beg everybody who reads this to answer. From the youngest reader, through youth and church groups, exiles, students and academics, prisoners, factory workers, farmers, poets, famous personalities, old-age pensioners — and do feel free to tell me more about yourself. Please we need the whole world's help here and now.

I promise to reply to every letter received to share the results. I will also forward the letters to our leader, Nelson Mandela and the ANC, as well as to F.W. de Klerk, and anyone else interested.

Shona Abantu, London, UK.

Mocking words

SIR: The frequent repetition of two groups of news items in the Arab Times need close review and your attention.

First are the items relating to Islamic laws which are clearly aimed at ridiculing Islam. They are being quoted by Arab Times from other world agencies. Such "Islamic news" are extracted out of their complete context and projected with manipulated words to give them mockable views by the anti-Islamic agencies. This is not new or surprising from them. What is alarming is that such news are selected to be reproduced in these Islamic countries in the same mocking words.

Secondly items like "sex" news which are finding front page space and bold letter prominence in the Arab Times. These can only generate similar ideas into the growing children here and their morality barriers get more and more flexible by such news.

We are sure that inclusion of such news must be finding Arab Times more enjoyable and agreeable to many of its readers. However, there are many others who consider it a matter of concern. We feel concerned to observe that gradually and definitely the forces set out to distort Islam and corrupt innocent minds are steering their ways into these Islamic countries in the cloak of progress.

The suffering caused by destruction of morality by random theologies are evident the world over. Let us prevent, value, and glorify the treasure of Islam in its true meaning and spirit.

Needless to mention that news media plays very important role in moulding the minds of its readers. It must be safeguarded with greater responsibility.

M.A. Jahanmir, Hawaii.

Kashmir issue

SIR: I am writing this in reply to some comments made by one Dr Haider Mahdi, regarding the situation in Kashmir state of India. Some comments of his are contrary to truth and are questionable.

"Kashmir to Kanyakumari" India is one. This feeling is in the heart of every Indian, regardless of religion or creed.

Indians have a unity in diversity. India is not a religious country. It is a secular state in the true sense. Every religion has the same right and freedom there. Moreover minorities have special constitutional safeguards and reservations. In Kashmir there is no dominance like Hindu dominance at the writer has alleged in his letter. There is Kashmir, and Indian dominance only. Moreover Kashmir is given special constitutional status, safeguards etc. considering its Muslim dominance majority, and its sensitive border position. Indian Muslims, who are minority, religious groups are enjoying the maximum religious freedom in India. India considers all its citizens equal. There are no religious favouritism.

Kashmir, as well as other states, groups, also will have many genuine grievances. To achieve the aim, looting, kidnapping of Muslim ladies and killing is not the way. India is a great, true, secular democratic country. By democratic process only a cause is fulfilled.

(Name and address supplied)

No comparison

SIR: Unfortunately, I happened to read the letter written by one Mohd. Akram, Safat, dated Feb 9, regarding the Kashmiri issue. I do not only strongly object to his views but also would like to mention that he is a fanatic who does not know what is really taking place around him. I'm sure he has never tried to go deep into the actual problems of Palestinians, instead he has only tried to accuse a press.

I fail to understand why being one of the reputed presses in Kuwait, Arab Times has spared that much space for a matter which is childish.

I would like to remind this gentleman that the Palestine problems can't be compared with the Kashmiri. It has got a gulf of difference in all levels.

A. Mundakkal
K.C.C.
Salimya.

Great news

SIR: The release of Nelson Mandela is a great news of the year 1990. Like India's great leader Mahatma Gandhi, Mandela dedicated his life for the nation and I wish that his ambitions are fulfilled in his life time.

H.S. Rao,

Safat.

ALL Letters to the Editor must contain the writer's name and address. Publication is at the discretion of the Editor and letters are subject to the editing process for space or other reasons.

Reforms to benefit movements

MOSCOW. (AP): The Soviet Union's move toward political pluralism is likely to give a new boost to a variety of broad-based movements known as "People's Fronts." These popular political organisations could eventually become formal opposition parties.

Separate people's fronts exist in most of the Soviet republics and in many of the major cities of Russia. Among the political organisations pressing the Communist Party for reform, these groups have gained some experience, a wide following and electoral success.

To the right of the Communist Party decision last Wednesday (Feb 7) to give up its constitutional claim to absolute political power, the people's front movement appears to be a first step from decades of Communist Party dictatorship to a system for formal political competition.

Since it first arose in the Baltic republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia almost two years ago in their first signs of serious organised opposition to communist rule, the movement has taken in a largely ill-defined mass of people, their local grievances and hopes for a better future.

Distinction

Some places, as in Estonia and Lithuania, there is little distinction between the leadership of the people's front and the reform-minded leaders of the Communist Party. Elsewhere, as in the Caucasus republics and in Moldavia, the people's front stands in opposition to the local Communist Party leadership.

Regardless, the fronts painstakingly point out that they are not political parties. Few, if any, of them have lists of

members or know how many members they have. None says it is actively seeking political power. The people's front organisations of various regions cooperate, but the emphasis remains on local issues, and there has been little effort to bring the entire movement together.

Nevertheless, leaders of the people's front movements say that they will at some point outline their purpose of energising an apathetic population. The next step is for various factions within the organisations to find their own platform and splinter off into political parties, they said.

"In this political structure, where there is no democracy, our goal is to re-establish a democratic, parliamentary system," said Tofik Gosyinov, one of 14 directors of the Azerbaijan People's Front. "Then it can go out of the picture and leave it to the development of political parties."

In the Baltic republics, where the process has gone furthest, the people's front movements already are forming the basis of new parties opposing the communists.

Groups

Journalism professor Marja Lautsina, one of those in the forefront of the Estonian People's Front, has helped found a new social democratic party. Small groups of social democrats, Christian democrats, liberals and other groups have formed in other Baltic republics as well.

Although they do not stand a chance of ousting the communists, such small parties will win some seats in local and republic elections this spring. The communists may be forced into governing coalitions, possibly with a people's

front umbrella uniting reformers among

Arabs fail to pay uprising cash

ABU DHABI, Feb 16, (Reuters): The PLO's top financial appeal to Arab states yesterday for more money to support Palestinian uprising in the Israeli-occupied territories, saying most were not honouring promises of cash made two years ago.

"We call on Arab countries to comply with the (1988) Algiers decision," to fund the uprising, Javed Al Ghusein, chairman of the Palestine National Fund (PNF), told Reuters. "This is the least they can do."

Ghusein said Arab states had paid well under 30 per cent of the sum they had pledged at an Arab summit in Algiers.

The summit endorsed an urgent payment of \$128 million and then \$43 million every month to support the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

More than 800 Arabs and 44 Jews have died in the revolt, now 26 months old.

"We have not received one dollar of the 128 million," said Ghusein, an executive committee member of the Palestine

Liberation Organisation (PLO).

"As for the \$43 million a month, we got less than 30 per cent of that in 1989," he said at his office in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

He said only Saudi Arabia (\$6 million a month), Iraq (\$4.2 million), the UAE (\$3 million) and Kuwait (\$2 million) were currently paying the PNF, the PLO's financial arm.

Libya had given \$4 to 5 million a month for eight months in 1988 but nothing in 1989, he said.

Last month however Tripoli began paying \$6 million a month directly to Palestinian hospitals and charities in the occupied territories, he added.

\$43 million a month was the minimum required to cover the basic needs of the 1.5 million Palestinians in the territories, which have been occupied by Israel since 1967, he said.

UAE President Sheikh Zaid Bin Sultan Al Nahyan had personally made a payment of \$10 million to the PNF, Ghusein said.

Mujahedeen reject Soviet plan

Rockets hit Kabul on first pullout anniversary



Afghan President Najibullah (left) smiles on the first anniversary of the Soviet military withdrawal from Afghanistan. Najibullah reiterated that he would not step down from power before proposed elections in a post-war Afghanistan. (Reuter wirephoto)

Cross-border visits agreed

Iran, Soviet Union sign accord

MOSCOW, Feb 16, (Reuters): The Soviet Union, dogged by unrest in several of its Muslim republics, signed two protocols with Iran to make cross-border visits easier and asked Tehran to help return calm to their frontier, Tehran Radio reported.

It quoted Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmoud Vaezi as saying the Kremlin should "treat the people in a prudent and peaceful manner."

Vaezi told the visiting Soviet Deputy Minister for Protocol and Consular Affairs, Boris Chalin, the agreements were in line with the demands of Soviet Azeris and other Muslims living near the two countries' 1,740-km (1,080-mile) frontier.

Chalin asked Vaezi for Iran's help to resolve problems of security and stability on the border, the radio said.

Tens of thousands of Soviet Azeris illegally crossed into Iran

after they burned border posts in a series of demonstrations starting on Dec 31.

A similar number of Iranians also went to Soviet Azerbaijan, but Iranian media dismissed reports in Moscow's official press that Azerbaijanis fighting the central government received weapons from across the border.

Tehran Radio on Wednesday urged Moscow not to use violence in Tajikistan, a Muslim republic in central Asia where 37 people were killed in ethnic riots this week. Last month Iran expressed regret about Moscow's use of force in Azerbaijan.

Iran, which sees itself as protector of Muslims around the world, says people in both republics are striving to regain their Islamic identity after President Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms ended decades of rigid communist rule.

KABUL, Feb 16, (Agencies): US-backed Afghan rebels, rejecting "all imported proposals" for peace, fired five rockets at Kabul and killed at least one person yesterday, the first anniversary of the completion of the Soviet withdrawal.

Fears among citizens, officials and diplomats of a massive rockets barrage on the bastion of the Soviet-backed government, however, did not materialise.

Mohammad Naqib Samer, a Foreign Ministry spokesman, said five rockets hit different spots of the city of 2 million.

One person was killed and at least two wounded by a rocket hitting the Kote Sanghi district and another person was wounded when a rocket hit a northern suburb, Samer said. Three other rockets caused no damage.

Samer said three of the missiles fired by rebels from nearby snow-covered mountains were "cluster rockets" that burst about 150 feet (45m) above the ground. Each releases 96 bomblets set to explode on impact or dormant until disturbed, according to foreign diplomats.

The rocket came one year from Feb 15, 1989, when Moscow ended a nine-year occupation of the country it invaded to back the communist government against Muslim insurgents.

There were no official ceremonies marking "one year of the independent defence of the homeland," although Najibullah marked the occasion Wednesday evening with a television and radio address offering refinements to his rejected peace plan.

Thursday, Afghan rebels in Islamabad, Pakistan, again shelled off Najibullah's proposal of a ceasefire and the convening of a grand council of all factions of Afghan society that would hold elections under UN auspices.

"Najibullah should not give himself the authority to propose anything that concerns the future of Afghanistan," said Abdul Rauf Sayaf prime minister of the government-in-exile set up by rebels in Pakistan last year.

"He might have Afghan citizenship, but he has been forced onto the country with tanks," Sayaf told a news conference.

The United States recently shifted its position on an Afghan settlement.

dropping its insistence that Najibullah step down prior to peace talks.

And Thursday in Washington, the State Department said it has suspended a \$30 million humanitarian food aid programme to Afghan rebel forces because US officials could not adequately monitor the deliveries.

Soviet officials this week reiterated their proposal for an end to foreign military aid to all factions at an international peace conference to include US, Soviet, Pakistan, Iranian and Afghan representatives.

But Sayaf vowed the resistance would score a military victory and warned against foreign bids for a political settlement to the 11-year-old war.

"Our fate will be decided by our hands and not by foreigners," he said.

The Soviet Union proposed on Wednesday the holding of an international conference attended by the United Nations and four other countries in addition to Afghanistan to look for a solution for the Afghan crisis.

"We propose a conference of these four countries with the participation of the United Nations secretary-general or his representatives," Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze said in an article published in the newspaper *Izvestia*.

Shevardnadze also suggested halting all arms supplies to the warring sides and suspending all military operations in a step toward demilitarisation of the country.

Iran-based Afghan rebels rebuilt the new Soviet peace plan.

The reaction to Shevardnadze's proposal was made in a Tehran news conference.

The Afghan foreign minister cautiously welcomed the new plan, but questioned whether the Afghan government would play a big enough part.

"All in all it is very interesting," Abdol Wazir said of the 10-point Soviet plan.

President Najib, Wednesday again appealed to Afghan opposition forces at home and abroad to enter into peace negotiations.

He offered the US-backed mujahedeen a six-month ceasefire and said his troops would stop firing long-range Scud missiles if the rebels stopped firing rockets at Kabul and other cities.

Israeli granny dies

Despite amputation

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, Feb 16, (Reuters): An Israeli grandmother who feared amputating her gangrenous leg would keep her out of heaven died today six days after having the operation, Israel Radio said.

Ruth Trabelsi, 84, an ultra-orthodox Jew of Tunisian origin, initially insisted she wanted to keep her body intact on religious grounds though doctors said she might die unless the limb was amputated.

Divided family members fought at her bedside and the state took the case to court out of concern for her well-being. A judge ruled she should not be forced to lose her leg.

"I am going to heaven on my own two feet," Trabelsi had told the judge.

Say meets Pope

Pope John Paul meets Peggy Say, the sister of American journalist Terry Anderson held in Beirut in March 1985. Say is making her fourth trip abroad to try to secure her brother's release and hopes to see Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and Iranian leaders. (Reuter wirephoto)

Hussain orders prisoners freed: King Hussain on Friday ordered the government to release 20 convicted political prisoners in a continuing drive toward political liberalisation.

State-run Jordan radio said the king ordered the prisoners "released immediately," but gave few details. Twenty-seven are Jordanians and two are foreigners, it said. (AP)

Egyptian ports reopen: Alexandria port reopened on Thursday after a two-day closure forced by strong winds and high seas, port officials said.

Ships had been trapped inside the harbour and others were kept waiting outside since the port was closed on Tuesday at 1330 GMT by winds of up to 50 km per hour (31 miles per hour).

The oil terminal of the Suez Mediterranean Arith Petroleum Products Company (Sumed) at Sidi Krar, 52 km (32 miles) west of Alexandria, was to reopen at 1300 GMT. It had also been closed since Tuesday. (Reuters)

Lebanon snowbound: Snow covered the tops of Lebanon's mountains in the east and the west areas and closed roads.

Weather reports said today that the temperature that dropped lower than zero degrees in the mountain areas reached three degrees in Beirut.

It added that the cold and rainy weather will continue on all Lebanon and snow will cover areas at 800 metres height. (Kama)

Mubarak to visit Moscow: President Hosni Mubarak is expected to start a three-day state visit to the Soviet Union March 19, his first since he came to power following the assassination of his predecessor, Anwar Sadat in 1981, the Middle East News Agency reported Wednesday.

The state-owned agency gave no details for Mubarak's trip but his talks with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev were expected to deal with bilateral relations, the Middle East and Soviet Jewish emigration to Israel. (AP)

Iranian drug kingpin killed: Law-enforcement agents killed a notorious drug kingpin identified as Bahach Esmail-Zehi in Western Iran, Tehran radio reported Thursday.

The broadcast said Esmail-Zehi, also known as Hajji Bahach Shahbakhsh, was killed by agents of Iran's revolutionary committee, which is responsible for enforcing the law throughout the country. (AP)

Monarchs discuss Arab rifts

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, Feb 16, (AP): King Fahd and King Hussein of Jordan met behind closed doors yesterday to discuss ways of ending the rift between Iraq and Syria and to have the way for an urgent Arab summit, diplomatic sources reported.

The sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the two monarchs also discussed the fighting in Lebanon, ways of curbing Soviet Jewish emigration to Israel and other pressing issues when they met at the guest palace in Riyadh.

The two monarchs held a first round of talks on Wednesday with senior aides present.

Hussein arrived in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday for consultations with Fahd after calling for an emergency Arab summit to discuss Soviet Jewish emigration to Israel.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation has also been pressing for a summit because the prospect of hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews settling in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip has raised widespread alarm.

The occupied zones, captured in 1967, roughly encompass the independent Palestinian state proclaimed by the Palestine National Council, the PLO's parallel-in-exile, in November 1988.

Israel committed to 'VOA station'

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, Feb 16, (UPI): Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said yesterday that he was committed to building a Voice of America relay station in Israel that has been criticised by environmental groups and senior military officers.

Shamir told Malcolm Forbes Jr., chairman of the US board of international broadcasting, that Israel will fulfill its 1987 agreement with the United States to build a VOA trans-

mitting station in southern Israel, Shamir's spokesman Avi Palmer said.

Arabs fail to pay uprising cash

KUWAIT, Feb 16, (Agencies): Jordan's Parliament Speaker Suliman Arar yesterday urged President Hafez Assad of Syria to take practical steps to revive the so-called eastern front facing Israel, Radio Damascus said in a broadcast monitored in Kuwait.

"We urge you to take actual steps to remove differences and clear relations, in order to build a unified Arab stand capable of confronting the challenges facing our country," the radio quoted Arar as saying in a cable to Assad.

Arar also called for closer co-operation between "Jordan, Syria and Iraq in all fields, particularly in the defence field."

Call to revive Iraqi-Syrian front against Israel

Saudi Arabia with Saudi King Fahd, amid reports that the two leaders were exerting efforts to reconcile Iraq and Syria.

Arab government officials said Fahd and Hussein, who returned home to Amman, Jordan later in the day, want to pave the way for the convening of an urgent Arab summit to discuss various issues, including the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel and the continuing crisis in Lebanon between rival Christian factions.

Diplomats said the release of the message might indicate Damascus would respond to it positively.



Running for safety

A Lebanese vegetable vendor runs for safety at the Museum Crossing, as Christian warring armies fought heavy battle for supremacy. (Raufer wirephoto)

Israel, Syria exchange 'feelers'

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, Feb 16, (Reuters): Israel and Syria, its bitterest Arab foe, have exchanged informal "feelers" in a step towards peace, Israeli sources said yesterday.

But Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, asked by a journalist to comment on reports of informal talks between the two sides, possibly on a peace agreement, replied: "I regret to say that it's not true."

The sources, who declined to be identified, said Syria was softening mainly because its key backer, the Soviet Union, had cut arms supplies and urged Damascus to change its diplomatic posture.

"There were feelers for a month or two. There are signs of change in the Syrian approach," one source told Reuters.

In Damascus, Foreign Minister Farouq Al Shara said in a statement: "These reports are baseless. There has been no direct or indirect talks between Syrian and Israeli officials on any level."

An accord between Syria and Israel, who have fought in four Middle East conflicts, would remove a major source of Middle East tension.

Israel captured the Golan Heights from Syria in the 1967 Middle East war and annexed the area in 1981. Damascus says it must regain the strategic plateau.

The Israeli sources said Moscow had urged Damascus to wake up to the changes sweeping Eastern Europe and other parts of the world and abandon its goal of strategic parity with Israel.

The London newspaper *The Independent* reported yesterday that envoys of the two countries had held informal talks.

The daily, quoting Arab and Western diplomats, reported the talks fell short of direct formal negotiations but had the approval of both Shamir and Syrian President Hafez Al Assad.

Officials in Israel's foreign and defence ministries denied knowing of the two meetings which the newspaper said had taken place in Austria over the last four months.

The "feelers" emerge at a time when Syria faces an economic crisis, a quagmire in Lebanon, tensions with Iraq and cooler relations with its guardian Soviet ally.

MOSCOW asks Israel to stop settling Jews in held areas

MOSCOW, Feb 16, (Agencies): The Soviet Union has called on Israel to stop settling immigrant Jews in occupied Arab territories and labelled Arab countries as conventional in thinking that the Soviet Union was a totalitarian state capable of solving all problems by imposing restrictions.

First Deputy Foreign Minister Yuli Vorontsov was quoted by Soviet weekly "Moscow News" as saying, "some still did not understand that the Soviet Union is no longer the state they knew some years ago."

Vorontsov noted that the US restrictions on immigrant Soviet Jews were meant to divert the influx of Jews to the occupied Arab territories.

"During the past years, we were accused of imposing restrictions on Soviet Jews emigration and when we cancelled them Washington imposed its own restrictions," he said.

Vorontsov indicated that the Supreme Soviet would pass the new travel law which enables thousands of Jews to reach Israel saying the law ensures the rights of travel for all Soviet citizens without exceptions.

He stressed that the Soviet Union would adhere to that law whether the others liked it or not.

Jewish settlers in the Israeli-occupied territories have threatened to kill any Palestinians who attacked their settlements in protest at Soviet immigration.

"If someone tries to use gunfire against Jews, he will be killed if someone shoots back," said Moshe Yosef, a leader of the ultra-nationalist Jewish settler movement Gush Emunim. "This is a war."

Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek urged today that Israel give up the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip in order to concentrate on absorbing the hundreds of thousands of Soviet

Meet a neighbour

His most important mission is the spread of Islam

Majid Al Refai

By Jadranka Porter
Arab Times staff

MAJID AL REFAI, a 31-year-old Kuwaiti, is in a hurry. Much is wrong with today's world, he says, and somebody has to do something about it.

"I want to be part of that effort, I have no time for rest," he insists.

A staunch follower of Islamic faith and a crusader at heart, Majid aspires to leave his mark in different spheres of life, the warfront in Afghanistan, banking and finance and lives of individuals.

With several degrees from the prestigious American Purdue University, good understanding of the Western lifestyle and Eastern traditions, and boundless energy, Majid, has already made a difference.

Under his chairmanship, the Lajnat Al Dawa Al Islamiyah, a multimillion charity organisation, has saved lives of thousands of Afghan refugees and mujahideen.

A chemical engineer-turned-banker he is a fervent promoter of Islamic banking which, he says, has dealt away with usury. He is about to set up an investment company to be based in Luxembourg and run on Islamic principles.

But perhaps his most important mission is to spread Islam, bring back those who have "strayed" and enliven new followers.

The Muslim spirit, he says, has eroded over the past 2,000 years, but is now on the mend.

"Unlike the Europeans and Americans whose development peaked when they were far removed from Christianity, Arabs prospered when the practice of Islam was at its peak," he explains.

Articulate and knowledgeable Majid delivers his convictions with eloquence not entirely unlike that of American TV evangelists.

His blue eyes and strong American accent, inherited from his American mother, cannot distinguish his identity as Arab Muslim. But they do make him more interesting, even controversial.

Revered by some Muslims for his Islamic zeal, Majid is less popular among liberal Kuwaitis.

What earns him respect in one group is hisudging to another. And statements such as "I have two wives and won't stop at that number" do not endear him to some Muslim women, let alone

the Western.

But he insists that he is "bicultural" because "I understand the East, I understand the West, and I can live with both without renouncing my beliefs."

However, he leaves no doubt as to where he truly belongs.

"If you don't stick to Islam you will end up in a gutter," is his message to the faithful and warning to non-believers.

Having been born and bred in the US, ("I sang in a church choir before I ever went to a mosque"), Majid feels particularly fit to explain Islam to Westerners.

Islam, he says, is powerful and possessive religion, it tells you how to live.

"Ten commandments are not enough. They tell you thou shall not commit adultery, but what do they ask him to run another mile?"

Betting bank is not the only area of conflict in Western and Islamic practices. The two worlds have traded accusations over social issues with Muslims blaming the Western lifestyle for social ills such as crime, drugs and divorce.

Islam gives a homosexual three days to repent, if he doesn't he deserves death by beheading from a high place. This is Islamic justice, he explains.

"Christianity is love, but Islam is justice," stresses Majid.

Where there is no justice, such as in Afghanistan, Muslims should bring it, he says. He admires the mujahideen struggle as a rare example of a 20th century Islamic Jihad. But instead of first building mosques there the Lajnat Al Dawa, Al Islamiyah embarked on transferring thousands of wounded fighters from inside the war front to their Pakistan border health units.

Aspiring to run the charity in a professional and efficient manner Majid also led efforts to provide basic services in refugee camps, cultivate crops, train paramedics and teachers and dig wells. Future projects include a KD200,000 orphanage and \$1.5 million high school. Twenty-five ambulance cars are shortly to arrive in Afghanistan and plans are under way for the organization to buy, equip and staff a unit in a proposed eye hospital.

Far from the war front, another aspect of Islamic justice can be found in Islamic banking which rejects the concept of interest.

Had Islamic banking principles been followed the world would have been saved from the debt crisis, contends Majid. "The Western banking practices have

brought the Third World countries down on their knees," he says.

To preclude misuse of funds the Islamic banks do not loan funds but instead buy equipment and material for projects. They are engaged in a continuous process of buying and selling and profits from such transactions are distributed among depositors. The Islamic financial institutions have much more sympathy for those facing a liquidity crisis.

Describing the Western banks, he contends. Demands for increased interest payments from the debtors he said: "The man is dying and what do they ask him to run another mile?"

Islam is powerful and possessive religion, it tells you how to live.

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Although Majid selects effective examples from the West to portray its "decadence" he admits that Arabs are equally guilty of poor conduct and harmful habits. He is anxious to draw

the line between Arab traditions and practices, and Islam.

The issue of women and their position in the society has been a traditional subject of dispute between Muslims and Westerners.

"Women in the West are treated like animals. That is why they rebelled, they have to challenge the men," he says contrary to the Western perceptions. Majid contends that in Islam women are given their identity, they are protected and respected. "They have the right to retain their name after marriage, to inherit property and to vote, although the right to vote is still denied in many Arab countries."

Critics of polygamy, he says, have yet to recognise that having more than one legal wife is fairer than being married to one and having several mistresses.

As for women, they don't like polygamy but they tolerate it.

"I didn't force my wives to marry me," he says laconically.

The law is black and white on all these issues for a man who tries to live by the Holy Quran. In his view that is not difficult as "Islam never goes against human nature."

But if Islam is perfect, man is fallible.

"We are people, not gods" he concludes.



Majid comforts an Afghan refugee girl at a health unit in Pakistan.

WHAT'S ON

ARTS

Seminar

THE seminar at the DAA, on Arabic and European Art in The Light of Zodiacal Symbolism has been postponed. It will be given during the period Feb 11 - March 11, 1990. Morning sessions on Sunday and Tuesday 11.00 - 12.30 am or evening sessions on Sunday and Tuesday 6.00 - 7.30 pm. Registration maybe made by phoning the Dar Al Athar Al Islamiyah, Tel: 2430826, 2432359.

Hobby Centre

FELTCRAFT as a medium for children to make pictures, flowers, toys etc. with felt. This new craft course will start February 27th and March 4th for 6 weeks for children from 8 years old. Tel: 5618847, 5317354.

Dar Al Athar Al Islamiyah 14 Feb. Architecture of Mamluk Jerusalem exhibition, opening 4.30 pm co-organized by the British Council Wed 14 February - Wed 21 February. This is a specially designed photographic exhibition which is accompanied by wall text and is on display for only a week. Dr Bourgoine who will give a lecture in Arabic and in English is author of the architectural catalogue which accompanied the exhibition.

SOCIAL

Carnival Dinner Nite The Entertainers will be held at the SAS Hotel (The Tent) with music provided by Top Ranks & Perfect Strangers, on 22nd Feb. 1990 from 20.30 hours onwards. Highlights of the evening: Parade by K-Momo, Crowning of Carnival Queen, Rumba Samba dance competition. Group prizes, and many other surprises. For further details please contact: The Organisers, Chopsticks Chinese takeaway. Tel: 5617243.

Kuwait Welsh Society ST. DAVID'S Day buffet dance Thursday 1st March 1990, at Messilah Beach Hotel. For ticket reservations & more information ring 3713467, 3912384, 5625316.

Sheheed Day

THE Bangladesh Association, Kuwait, will hold a cultural function on the occasion of "Sheheed Day" on Feb 24, at 6.30 pm at the Bangladesh embassy premises, Khalidiya. Mr. K. M. Shehazuddin, the ambassador, will be the chief guest. All Bangladeshis are invited.

Flute recital

PRESENTED by a group of 4 young Austrian artists at the Kuwait International Hotel on 24th February at 8.00 pm. Winners of the first prize at the Youth Musicians' Festival in Austria, they have recorded for the radio and television in Italy, Luxembourg, Switzerland, USSR, Egypt and Austria. In the Terrace Room. Tel: 2530000 ext 8039/8040

Oil and Gas Catalogue Show THE Commercial Service of the American embassy announces an "Oil and Gas Catalogue Show," at the Kuwait Continental Hotel during Feb 19-20, 1990, between 8.30 am and 8.30 pm.

Catalogues of more than 200 US companies in the Oil and Gas industry will be displayed. Interested firms are invited to attend.

For further information please contact Abdulla Mejjali, Tel: 2424151 ext 267. Fax: 2407368.

Robbie in the lobby

ROBBIE 2002 a remote control robot over 1.2 metre tall will be performing in the main lobby of the Kuwait International Hotel on 23rd, 24th and 25th February at 2.00 pm and 6.00 pm. It can greet, talk, rotate, bow backwards and forwards, tap dance and perform many other tricks to entertain children of all ages. It has made over 200 television appearances the most successful being the British TV Quiz show 3.2.1 having over 17 million viewers and was seen across the world. Tickets on sale now. KD1.000 per person. Tel: 2530000 ext 8040.

Bits 'n' Pieces

An interesting 8 week course in pattern work and quilting techniques. For details contact Tel. 5634663.

Handicrafts exhibition

UNDER the auspices of the Minister of Interior, Sheikh Salm Al Sabah, an exhibition of handicrafts for young Kuwaiti boys and girls will be opening on February 24 until February 28 at the Kuwait Regency Palace. For more information contact Salwa Al Harhi on 4835598.

British Council

LECTURE/ACCESS COURSES FOR YOUR FIRST DEGREE Monday 19 February at 6.00 pm: A special talk for students from non-British schools (and their parents) who would like to go to Britain for their degree after they have finished school.

There will be lots of information about the different routes that overseas students can take to gain entrance to a British Degree Course. The talk will be followed by a question and answer session. Everyone is welcome. There is no admission charge but please telephone us to reserve your seat. Tel: 253204/253 3227 and ask for the education office.

Hotel Meridien Kuwait

Envoy Thai cuisine every Saturday night at La Brasserie in addition to its daily lavish buffet. Thai specialities are prepared by the chef in front of guests.

COWBOY NIGHT EVERY SUNDAY: Enjoy live country music, western decor and hearty ranch food prime ribs, burgers, tacos and great desserts including mom's apple pie. Visit La Brasserie for a real country boozefest.

EVERY MONDAY NIGHT AT LA BRASSERIE: Enjoy Chinese cuisine in addition to its lavish daily buffet. Chinese specialities are prepared to order.

Children's variety show

RANGDHANU, a children's variety show which includes a play, will be staged on March 1, Thursday at the Theatre Hall of Kuwait University Law Faculty, Shuaibkh campus, at 6.30 pm. For cards contact 4840759, 4312730, 4312280, 4733106 or 3729425.

Indian Cuisine Centre

Indian art of fancied lac banigies and designer lemons work comes live at the finest Indian cuisine centre of Kuwait at the Maharaja Palace Restaurant.

Come savour the delicacies whilst giving your lady a gift to cherish. For more information contact 2406150.

ACOI seven-a-side

ACOI overseas is pleased to announce their first one day football tournament which will be held on the March 1, 1990, at the Sour Grounds.

For further information contact Casimiro D'Souza or Menino Leitao at the Sour Grounds.

Singapore festival

SAS Kuwait Hotel will feature Singapore festival on 20th and 21st February at The Tent. The oriental extravaganza will present lion dances, Chinese dances, finger painter plus elaborate huffet of popular Singaporean recipes prepared by Singaporean chefs. First of its kind in Kuwait, the show was put up in co-operation with Singapore Tourist Promotion Board and Singapore Airlines and aims to foster closer relations between the two countries. Tickets available at SAS hotel. For reservations, please call 2441860, between 9-12 noon.

Craft Centre

MOTHERS are your hands too full with your tots on weekends? Here's a chance for you to relax and introduce them to creative art. For details contact 5635740, between 9-12 noon.

TIVIM Centre

TIVIM Centre is pleased to announce their 3rd Annual 9-a-side Inter Village Football Tournament which will be held on the Sour grounds, Kuwait City, beginning March 27/28 1990. For further information please contact organisers — 2441860 Casimiro.

II Annual one act Play Competition

INDIAN Arts Circle announces the II Annual One Play Competition to be held on May 19, 1990. The competition is open to plays in any Indian language including English. Awards shall include Best Play (1st, 2nd & 3rd), Best Director, Best Actor & Actress, Best Child Actor, Best Stage Setting and Best Acting Performance from each team. Registration form with rules & regulations are available from Indian Arts Circle office at Funaitas. Last date of submitting registration form with required details is 28th February, 1990.

Please contact IAC office (Tel. 3904817) for further details. All Indian associations engaged in theatrical activities are requested to join.

easily divorce a woman, and then she can lose her "domain." But the Muslim divorcees are not as destitute as an outsider would be tempted to think.

"Although everyone wants a virgin, divorcees, too, can find a match," says Majid.

The question of polygamy is not a contentious issue for Majid.

"It is a progressive solution to a social problem," he says. The "social problem" can be created by wars which leave many women unprotected, woman's inability to have children or if the man is oversexed, he explains.

Critics of polygamy, he says, have yet to recognise that having more than one legal wife is fairer than being married to one and having several mistresses.

As for women, they don't like polygamy but they tolerate it.

"I didn't force my wives to marry me," he says laconically.

The law is black and white on all these issues for a man who tries to live by the Holy Quran. In his view that is not difficult as "Islam never goes against human nature."

But if Islam is perfect, man is fallible.

"We are people, not gods" he concludes.

French Film Festival

REVERED DIALOGUES: In 1799 and at start of stage of Terreur Blanch takes up sisterhood. In her uncertainties of her loyalist Blanch had to pay heavily. To be screened today at 7:30 pm at the Chamber of Commerce. The film is directed by Philippe Agostini (1980) and is starring Jeanne Moreau and Pierre Brasseur auditorium.

INTERPOL: BEHIND THE MYTH: In 1923 almost 150 countries have joined the organisation and developed a network for police co-operation worldwide. Two thirty-minute programmes Mike Bullen goes behind the scenes at Interpol and gets a unique insight into its operations. Sunday, February 18 at 19:15 and Monday, February 19 at 16:30.

HEALTH FEATURE/PHONE-IN: In 1923 almost 150 countries have joined the organisation and developed a network for police co-operation worldwide. Two thirty-minute programmes Mike Bullen goes behind the scenes at Interpol and gets a unique insight into its operations. Sunday, February 18 at 19:15 and Monday, February 19 at 16:30.

HEALTH PHONE-IN: Sunday, February 18 at 16:15 and Monday, February 19 at 09:30 and 13:01.

HEALTH PHONE-IN: Sunday, February 18 at 16:15 and Monday, February 19 at 09:30 and 13:01.

STORIES BY KATHERINE MANSFIELD: Joanna David reads *Femelle d'Album* by the New Zealand writer Katherine Mansfield. Set in Paris it is the story of a young English artist who is shy and rather lonely and captivated by a young girl who lives across the street from his studio. But how does he get

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Vienna bourse hits new highs

VIENNA, Feb 16, (Reuter): Austria's stock market surged to a record high today as a rising tide of foreign investors seized on business potential in Eastern Europe.

"They are buying up their vision of Europe and are going to hang onto it for a few years to come," said Fritz Schweiger, analysts at Austria's second largest Birozentrale.

Foreign investors believe that many Austrian firms will be able to tap fresh opportunities in post-communist Eastern Europe. Construction firms and breweries have been particularly in demand.

And the first Hungarian share to be listed on a Western exchange is due to join Vienna this year, that of Hungary's Ibusz Travel Agency.

The Vienna bourse index jumped 21.18 points today to an all-time closing high of 687.78, a gain of more than 120 points since the start of the year. Daily turnover peaked at 1.75 billion schillings (\$147 million) on February 5.

Analysts say shares will probably continue to strengthen, underpinned by foreign demand.

"I expect there to be an increase of up to 25 per cent this year from present levels," said Michael Lielacher of Austria's Die Erste Bank.

Schweiger said foreign investors accounted for around 80 per cent of current business.

Five foreign investment funds have already begun to pour what is expected to total around 4.6 billion schillings (\$386 million) into the Vienna Stock Exchange. The largest, run by Japanese broking giant Nomura, is expected to invest 2.1 billion schillings (\$176 million).

Gulf service upgraded

POLISH Ocean Lines (POL), Poland's national carrier, has upgraded its Baltic — North Continental service to the Arabian Gulf.

It has changed the routing of its twice-monthly services in a bid to increase the load availability for North Continent customers.

The move was announced by POL's regional manager, Mr Tadeusz Ktarzki during a visit to Dubai.

It means that one of the scheduled services will load only in Poland and Sweden before calling in the Gulf, while the second will load only at North Continent ports before sailing for the Gulf.

Previously both services loaded in Poland and in North Continent ports which restricted the space available for cargo coming from the continent.

"Because of the new sailing schedule we expect to capture an increased share of the local and European market," said Captain Lars Saferstrom.

Oapec get new chief

KUWAIT, Feb 16, (Reuter): The Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) said yesterday it had appointed Abdul-Aziz Al Turki as its new secretary general.

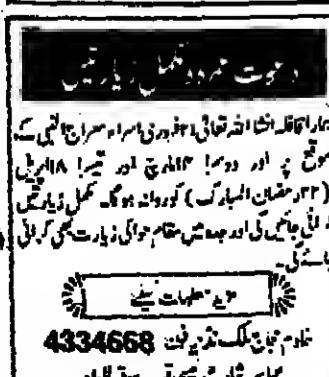
A statement by the 10-nation organisation said Turki, under-secretary general at Saudi Arabia's Oil Ministry, would take up the post on March 1, replacing the current acting secretary general, Abdel Aziz Al Wattari.

OAPEC was formed in 1968 to promote Arab energy projects.

Turkey to hike air fares

ANKARA, Feb 16, (Reuter): Turkey's state-run airline Thy will raise domestic fares by up to 25 per cent from March 1, a Thy official said.

The price of a single ticket between Istanbul and Ankara rises to 150,000 lira (\$63) from 120,000 lira (\$50).



East Europe seeks Western cash

BRUSSELS, Feb 16, (Reuter): East European states seeking Western cash to help them ditch communism submitted shopping lists of their needs to the world's richest countries today.

Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Romania and East Germany put in bids to join Poland and Hungary in an aid and support

programme from 24 leading industrialised democracies, including the European Economic Community, the United States and Japan.

Their submissions, ranging from Romania's single sheet to a 40-page dossier from East Germany, were considered by a meeting of senior officials of the 24.

The requests included billion dollar loans for Yugoslavia, help with nuclear safety for Czechoslovakia and equipment to make antibiotics, carpets and shoes for East Germany.

An EEC spokesman said the meeting would assess the countries' progress in reforms, take soundings of their needs and discuss political conditions to be

attached to aid. But it would not make any decision on granting aid.

Ministers will have to endorse any extension of the existing programme, although they have in principle agreed to do so for countries that show commitment to reform, pledge free elections and switch to market-oriented economies.

The ministers are not scheduled to meet again until June, but the spokesman hinted some action to support the newcomers might be possible before then. Emergency food and medical needs are being treated separately.

East Germany's memorandum identified what it saw as all the weakness in its economy, and its call for help with

restructuring is aimed almost exclusively at the 12-nation European Economic Community, rather than the rest of the Group of 24.

Most officials and diplomats in Brussels expect rapid moves to German unification after East Germany's March 18 elections. This will effectively mean it gets absorbed into the EEC.

Non-Opec crude output drops

Nippon to buy more oil from S. Arabia



Hisham M. Nazer

TOKYO, Feb 16, (Agencies): Japan's Nippon Oil Company is planning to double its imports from Saudi Arabia to 160,000 bpd, according to the company's chairman, Yasuaki Takeuchi.

Takeuchi told reporters that the company, which currently imports 650,000 bpd of crude oil, would buy all 80,000 bpd through Caltex Petroleum Corporation, a joint venture between Chevron and Texaco.

He added that Nippon wanted all of the 80,000 bpd increase to be Arab Berni extra light crude and also wanted to reduce its imports from producing countries with limited export capacities.

He said the advantage of importing Saudi crude through oil majors lay in receiving more super light crude than through a direct deal contract, adding that "majors are better equipped than us to process heavy types of crude."

Quoted by the Reuters news agency, he said Nippon Oil had already decided to boost Saudi crude imports before Saudi Arabian Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources Hisham M. Nazer asked the company and other Japanese refiners to do so when he visited Tokyo recently.

He disclosed that Nazer had asked Nippon to sign a direct deal contract, rather than buy through third parties, saying it would be better for the company in terms of supply security.

Meanwhile the amount of oil produced outside the Opec organisation fell last year by about 790,000 barrels per day, mainly due to lower Soviet and US output, a Reuter survey showed.

The prospect for non-Opec production continues to be moderately gloomy," former US Secretary of Energy James Schlesinger said in an interview.

The Reuter survey is based on information from oil companies, industry analysts and official sources outside of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

Non-Opec output fell about 790,000 barrels per day last year to an average of 33.38 million barrels daily, the survey showed.

Waning US and Soviet production accounted for most of the drop and analysts predict their output will fall further.

US production dropped an average 500,000 barrels per day to 7.64 million barrels, according to the Energy Information Administration.

The 1989 average was the lowest since 1964, when output fell to 7.61 million barrels per day.

Meanwhile, oil prices surged in New York yesterday on reports that an earthquake in the Alaskan region had affected operations of the main pipeline carrying over a quarter of the nation's crude.

On the New York Mercantile Exchange (Nymex), West Texas Intermediate (WTI), the American benchmark crude, ended the day 77 cents higher at \$22.84 a barrel for March delivery while the April contract gained 48 cents to \$22.43.

On the US Gulf Coast spot market, where oil is bought and sold for cash, WTI was up 70 cents to finish at \$22.80.

It was later reported that an earth tremor measuring 4.5 on the Richter scale had hit the area 35 km from Valdez but the pipeline, which carries around two million bpd of crude, was not damaged and supplies remained uninterrupted.

Analysts said that the evacuation of an oil storage terminal near the epicentre of the eruption had sparked off the fears.

NYMEX heating oil was quoted at 58.65 cents a gallon, an increase of 1.01 cents, while unleaded gasoline was up 0.75 cent to 60.64 cents.

Meanwhile, in European trading Britain's North Sea Brent climbed 40 cents to \$20.15 while the United Arab Emirates' Dubai light, the main Opec Middle East crude, gained 19 cents to end trading at \$16.59.

Tunisia signs oil and gas contracts

TUNIS, Feb 16, (Agencies): Tunisia has signed contracts to buy 300,000 tonnes of Libyan gasoil and kerosene and 100,000 tonnes of Algerian liquefied gas this year, Economy Minister Moncef Belaid said yesterday.

Tunisia has also renewed for three years a contract for 400 million cubic metres of Algerian natural gas a year, he told the closing session of a meeting of North African energy ministers.

Belaid gave no prices but Tunisian officials said they would be in line with those on the international market.

The two-day meeting approved in principle proposals to link the electricity grids of the five countries in the Arab Maghreb Union.

The historical cost profit figure was boosted by profits from oil stocks of \$365 million (\$347 million) and by the sale of BP subsidiaries.

BP's profits were in line with stock market forecasts, but analysts said the company benefited from a lower than expected tax bill in the final quarter of the year.

World oil sales last year rose on buoyant demand and a fall in production by countries outside the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, although this was offset by output increases by members of Opec, BP said.

In the short term, volatile oil prices would depend on whether Opec can hold down oil production.

"In the longer term, there are signs that demand could grow faster than supply, leading to a general increase in prices," the company said.

On a replacement cost basis — using the current market price of oil to value its stocks — BP's net income fell to £1.36 billion (\$2.50 billion) last year from £1.44 billion (\$2.43 billion) in 1988.

The annual dividend to shareholders rose to 14.9 pence (25.2 cents) per share from 13.5 pence (22.8 cents).

BP said oil exploration and production activities did well from higher oil prices, the sale of subsidiary companies early in 1989 and the strength of the US dollar, the currency in which oil is traded.

Exploration and production profits rose to £1.57 billion (\$2.33 billion) last year from £1.36 billion (\$2.33 billion).

Oil refining and marketing profits fell back to £732 million (\$1.24 billion) from £769 million (\$1.36 billion) in 1988.

BP's chemical division posted record results, with profits rising to £540 million (\$913 million) from £514 million (\$869 million).

The company said it expected to earn about £1.4 billion (\$2.37 billion) from the sale of parts of its group this year.

In another development Egypt decided yesterday to reduce by 90 cents a barrel the prices of all blends of its export crude oil in the second half of February.

The slash, effective today, represents a decrease of almost 10 per cent since Feb 1 in the price of the top-grade Gulf of Suez blend. Oil Ministry sources attributed the slide to overproduction by some Opec shares that has caused a world market glut.

Hamed Ayesh, director of the ministry's foreign sales, announced the new cut after a meeting of the committee that reviews prices every 15 days. Prices were cut by one dollar across the board in the first half of February.

Ayesh said the new prices are \$17.60 a barrel for Gulf of Suez; \$16.75 a barrel for Relyan; \$15.60 a barrel for Ras Bedra; and \$15.30 a barrel for Ras Ghareb.

He refused to discuss reasons for the reduction.

But sources close to the pricing committee said it was due to a world market surplus, which resulted from overproduction by some members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries. The sources refused to name the affected offenders.

The organisation decided last November to raise the overall production ceiling of its 13 member states by 1.5 million barrels per day to 22 million barrels for the first half of 1990.

In a Cairo newspaper interview the following month, Egyptian Oil Minister Abd-Hady Kandil said he did not expect Opec members to honour their quotas under the new agreement, just as they had reengaged on previous commitments.

Kandil criticised Opec for asking non-member countries to commit themselves to agreements that the organisation's own members violated. He stressed he had rejected an Opec request to support the new ceiling.

Egypt produces about 900,000 barrels of crude oil daily, exporting almost half. Kandil said this volume is being maintained.

Oil prices surge

BP profits jump

LONDON, Feb 16, (Reuter): Oil multinational British Petroleum announced record 1989 profits yesterday thanks to higher oil prices and a stronger dollar.

BP said historical cost net profits — which value oil stocks on the basis of what they cost to acquire — rose to £1.74 billion (\$2.94 billion) from £1.21 billion (\$2.04 billion) in 1988.

The historical cost profit figure was boosted by profits from oil stocks of \$365 million (\$347 million) and by the sale of BP subsidiaries.

BP's profits were in line with stock market forecasts, but analysts said the company benefited from a lower than expected tax bill in the final quarter of the year.

World oil sales last year rose on buoyant demand and a fall in production by countries outside the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, although this was offset by output increases by members of Opec.

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BUSINESS

South Yemen sets major wage rises to end strikes

ADEN, South Yemen, Feb 16, (UPI): The government has ordered big wage increases after more than a month of strikes that would have been banned before South Yemen brought in its own "perestroika."

A late-night radio announcement Thursday said the increases would range from 18 dinars (\$52) a month for the lowest wages to 6 dinars (\$18) a month for the highest.

The announcement came after a meeting of the central committee of the ruling Yemeni Socialist Party led by secretary-general Ali Salem Al Beidb.

The minimum wage for manual and white-collar workers in the country, mainly concentrated in Aden, the capital and Red Sea Port, is 60 dinars (\$176) a month.

For the lowest category, the increase is 30 per cent. Higher wages are around 150 dinars (\$440) a month.

The strikes began in early January at a research centre of the Ministry of Education and spread to several government offices as well as the Aden refinery, the major printing house and the country's main textile mill.

The vital port facility continued to operate normally, however.

The workers would show up at their offices or plants but do no work except in emergencies, returning to their homes at closing time.

Party officials introduced special squads to maintain operations and avert a total breakdown of operations at the sites where strikes occurred.

It was not possible to gauge the impact of the wage hikes as today is the weekly Muslim holiday, but life was expected to return to normal at the start of the work week tomorrow.

Until recently strikes were forbidden but the leadership has been emulating Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika in recent months, especially in the economic sector.

South Yemen became the Arab world's only Marxist-ruled country shortly after it gained independence from Britain in 1967.

The only public demonstrations by workers that people remember in Aden was in the early 1970s when they took to the streets to clamour for wage cuts to help the government face economic dross.

At that time, minimum wages were in the vicinity of 100 dinars (\$294) a month.

South Yemen is moving toward unity with the pro-Western North Yemen and residents began complaining of a rising cost of living when border restrictions were eased between the two countries in recent months.

US trade deficit dips

WASHINGTON, Feb 16, (Reuters): The American trade deficit fell by a wider-than-expected 30.3 per cent in December to \$7.17 billion, helping the United States to its best yearly trade performance in five years, the Commerce Department said today.

For the year, the deficit slid to \$108.6 billion from \$118.5 billion in 1988. It was the lowest shortfall since 1984, when it was \$106.7 billion.

The December figure was the lowest monthly trade deficit in five years since a \$6.7 billion gap in December 1984.

The improvement in the monthly deficit during December exceeded analysts' expectations that it would fall to a \$9.8 billion trade gap from November's \$10.3 billion.

December's unexpectedly good figure lifted the dollar and bonds to brief gains. But both later fell back to show only slight gains.

Imports fell 15.9 per cent during December to \$3.3 billion, as oil purchases from abroad fell despite the bitterly cold month.

Exports rose 2.4 per cent to \$3.1 billion.

The November trade deficit was revised down to \$10.3 billion from the previously reported \$10.5 billion but was still the biggest monthly deficit in 1989.

Currency rates

KUWAIT, Feb 16, (Kuwait): Following are the international currency rates as quoted by local banks and announced by the Central Bank of Kuwait yesterday.

	Selling
U.S. dollar	0.29014 0.29129
Sterling	0.49091 0.49432
DM	0.17254 0.17375
Sw. Fr.	0.19355 0.19497
F Fr.	0.05072 0.05110
It lire	0.0002322 0.0002338
Jap yen	0.0020307 0.0020186
Bab din	0.76940 0.77286
L. AE Dh.	0.78789 0.79003
S. rials	0.07743 0.07769
O. mal	0.07667 0.08006
O. rial	0.75341 0.75689

NEW YORK, Feb 16, (UPI): Drexel Burnham Lambert Group Inc. wound down affairs at many of its subsidiaries Wednesday and put its most negotiable securities holdings on the auction block in the aftermath of the filing for bankruptcy protection.

The Wall Street investment firm was expected to lay off at least 3,500 of its 5,300 employees today in the financial sector's most dramatic cutbacks to date. The fall of Drexel, which led the debt-fuelled takeover frenzy of the late 1980s, was seen as bringing down a final curtain on that era.

Drexel president Frederick Joseph filed a petition for relief under Chapter 11 of the U.S. bankruptcy code late Tuesday in Federal Bankruptcy Court in Manhattan. The private investment firm acted after defaulting on \$100 million in loans and beginning to sell off its bond holdings.

The company, which pioneered the use of high-yield, high-risk junk bonds to finance corporate takeovers, had been hammered since September by a precipitous decline in the junk bond market.

Drexel's petition listed total assets of \$3.69 billion and

liabilities of \$2.89 billion, including secured debt of \$75 million, unsecured debt of \$269 million and "other liabilities" of \$2.52 billion. The filing was believed to be the largest bankruptcy in Wall Street history.

Some Drexel operations continued Wednesday, although employees were uncertain about their futures. "We're not quite sure," said one who requested anonymity. "The equity division might be sold off, so we're just waiting to see."

Drexel ceased its over-the-counter trading, a national association of securities dealers official said. A Wall Street source said the firm cleared its Nasd inventory and would not resume trading.

In New York Mercantile Exchange oil futures trading Drexel's accounts and positions were transferred to other members in an "orderly winding down" of its affairs, an exchange official said. Drexel's Canadian branch asked that its membership on the Toronto Stock Exchange be suspended.

Drexel remained active on the New York Stock Exchange, where its Drexel Burnham Lambert Specialist Corp. continued to trade in 33 issues.

A spokesman for the American Stock Exchange said the Drexel specialist in 58 American-listed issues was "dealing as usual."

As on Tuesday, Drexel accepted only liquidation orders for all-cash transactions on the sugar and cocoa exchange in New York. The Chicago Board of Trade said Drexel met all financial requirements for commodities trading, but did not specify if Drexel was actively trading.

Wall Street sources said securities dealers and institutional investors were picking up Drexel's stock of government and agency securities — the most negotiable part of its investment portfolio. But questions remained as to how it would dispose of its devolved junk bonds.

Markets were calm in the aftermath of the company's collapse. Most financial analysts said there was no reason to fear a wider crisis.

"I think they slipped below the waves without a ripple," said Roger Craig, a fixed-income portfolio director for Banc One Asset Management Corp. in Columbus, Ohio. "It's a non-event except for the junk (bonds)."

A White House spokesman

said Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady "continues to keep in touch" with the Federal Reserve Board and the Securities and Exchange Commission, which oversaw Drexel's operations.

A Fed spokesman defended the central bank's decision not to take measures to rescue the firm. "Our role isn't to save a private corporation," he said. "Our role is to make sure the financial markets aren't disrupted."

Drexel's investment and government securities subsidiaries were not included in the bankruptcy filing. Wall Street sources said it was probable that Drexel Burnham Lambert Inc. and Drexel Burnham Lambert Government Securities Inc. would go out of business once their assets were liquidated.

But analyst Gary Hovis of Argus Research said he believed the holding company had a chance of emerging from bankruptcy "a viable but very slimmed-down firm," built around its government securities unit.

Drexel had a 1989 loss of about \$40 million due to legal costs incurred in a federal investigation of alleged insider trading. In 1988 it agreed to pay \$650 million in penalties to settle

federal changes.

Most concern focused on

Drexel's considerable junk bond holdings, which were not thought likely to attract many buyers. Ironically, though, the junk bond market that Drexel played a chief role in launching

ralied as its former mover and

shaker floundered.

Business professor Marshall Bloom of the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania offered one explanation. "In some ways there was an over-

hang over the market because of the (legal and other) problems Drexel was having, and that has been removed," he said.

But there were no takers and Drexel's credit dried up, the firm was unable to continue normal trading.

Contractors seek govt compensation

Jordan to unify exchange rates

Debt rescheduling pact

AMMAN, Feb 16, (Reuters): Jordan, implementing IMF-agreed economic reforms, will abolish its two-tier exchange rate for the dinar this month, the Central Bank announced.

The official news agency Petra said yesterday the Central Bank had told banks the rate would be unified on February 17.

The International Monetary Fund, which offered Jordan a standby credit in July, generally favours a unified, realistic exchange rate. An IMF team is due in Amman soon to agree performance criteria for this year.

The Central Bank also said it would sell dollars at 673 fils and buy them at 671 fils, and instructed banks not to resell dollars for more than 675 fils. The dinar has 1,000 fils.

Since August the Central Bank has maintained an official rate, set yesterday at 659/662 fils to the dollar, for imports of medicine and subsidised food, fees of Jordanians studying abroad and remittances of foreign farm workers.

Banks were theoretically free to set their own exchange rates, but the Central Bank made small, periodic interventions and asked banks not to diverge from

the rates it suggested.

In recent months the Central Bank has sought to close the gap between the official and bank prices by allowing the official rate to sink slowly against the dollar and intervening to boost the bank rate, currently 675 fils to the dollar.

The Central Bank, helped by an infusion of Arab aid to

be vulnerable if Jordan runs into balance of payments difficulties again, though officials voice confidence that Amman can meet its financing obligations.

In another development Jordan's contracting firms may go out of business if the government does not compensate them for losses caused by the devaluation of the dinar, the head of the contractors association said yesterday.

"Our situation is deteriorating day by day," Ali Abu Ragheb, president of the Jordanian Contractors' Association, told Reuters. "We are facing a crisis."

He said the fate of more than 100 firms with public sector contracts was at stake due to the slide in the dinar, which has lost over two-fifths of its dollar value since 1988.

The devaluation had more than doubled the cost of imported construction materials, he said.

"... We would have been eligible for compensation had the government officially devalued the dinar," he said. "But since it was the Central Bank that took measures to regulate the dinar, contractors have to prove their cases in court."

The devaluation had more than doubled the cost of imported construction materials, he said.

"... We could not imagine in the present circumstances a formula for the rescheduling of bank debt that is not at least as favourable as the formula agreed by the club," Trichet said.

By calling forcefully for comparable treatment of creditors, the Paris Club could be setting the stage for a showdown between Poland and its commercial bank creditors, diplomats said.

In practice, banks have often had to wait months or even years for interest payments from hard-pressed debtor countries. But, as Trichet acknowledged, they have never agreed to include in a formal rescheduling agreement the postponement of all interest payments.

Vice-Finance Minister Janusz Sawicki, who led the Polish delegation to the Paris Club talks, expressed confidence that the banks would agree appropriate terms, but he said no date had yet been set for negotiations.

He welcomed today's accord, saying it would open the door to the fresh capital that was indispensable if Poland was to succeed in transforming its economy along market lines after 40 years of communist central planning.

Privatisation of banks would be a key requirement.

Law approved for central bank

EAST BERLIN, Feb 16, (Reuters): East Germany's caretaker cabinet approved draft legislation on Thursday for an independent central bank but failed to agree on a package to lower punitive taxes on private income.

Government spokesman Wolfgang Meyer told a news conference the banking law, which was to be approved by parliament, would also take steps to set up a system of private bank branches.

Communist Prime Minister Hans Modrow promised West German businessmen during a visit to Bonn this week that his coalition government would press on with economic reforms ahead of the country's first free elections on March 18.

Decisions are being taken without any discussions with the EEC's trading partners, "Modrow complained, leaving East Germany wary about market access. "More contacts between the two sides are necessary" to ease these concerns, Modrow said.

He stressed the EEC will not close its doors to Asian

progressive radicals demanding rapid and far-reaching economic and political reforms.

Yesterday, the government appealed for approval of the private property law.

"If we want to have a market economy and take part in the international marketplace, then we need such a law," Justice Minister Veniamin F. Yakovlev said in defence of the proposal to establish private property rights.

President Mikhail S. Gorbachev's nearly five-year tenure as Soviet leader has led to numerous upheavals in politics and society, but few official proposals have the ideological sweep of the proposed private property law.

Bombay shares

Bombay Stock Exchange prices (Rs) Feb 16,

	Pr.Close	Open	Close	Hind CoCo	144	143	145
ACC	341	341	340	Hind Motor	24.75	24.50	25
Alm Chex	—	—	—	Hindalco	220	220	222
Alw Nis	—	—	—	Hoechst	1570	1550	1595
Ali Fab	—	—	—	ITC	52	52	53
Alibz Ley	83	81	82	Ind Org	54	54	54
Aliai Paint	216.25	215	212.50	Ind Rayon	88.50	88.50	89
Alis Corp	40	38.50	40	JK Syn	55	53	54
Auto Corp	—	55	50	Kin Engg	146	147	146
Nai Index	379.37	382.94	382.94	Kir Cumm	73	74	73
Bajaj Auto	392.50	392.50	398.75	KSB Pumps	197.50	195	201.5
Bair Rayon	697.50	702.50	712.50	Lipton	90	92	92
Blow Plat							

Scotland Yard museum

Bizarre tribute to police success

LONDON. (Reuter): Scotland Yard's Black Museum is not for the squeamish nor the faint of heart.

Closed to the public, the dimly-lit chamber's grisly exhibits includes bits of victims from one of Britain's most horrific series of murders and the glinting steel used to slice them up.

Death masks of executed criminals stare down at visitors and the ropes by which they were hanged give a macabre atmosphere to Room 101 of London's Metropolitan police headquarters.

Founded last century this chamber of horrors charts 850 cases cracked by "The Met," founded by Sir Robert Peel in 1829 when policing was simpler and justice was harsher.

By far the most stomach-churning display is a bath, cooker, pots and knives used by serial killer Dennis Nilsen to butcher and dispose of many of his up to 16 victims.

"I lose about five visitors a week in here (when they faint)," Bill Waddell, the dark-suited curator tells a small party of guests selected by senior police officers.

Nilsen cut up and boiled his victims then crammed them down sewers. "Any of you cook?" asked Waddell. "Well that's human stock," he said pointing to a glutinous chunk.

A detective visiting Nilsen's bedsit lifted the lid of a pot and found a head.

"Are you always that white?" Waddell asks an increasingly pallid visitor. "If you're going to faint, the collapse in then bath and we won't have to worry about you."

The museum is used to train officers but is also a bizarre tribute to some of the police's most successful cases covering murder, terrorism and forgery.

Painstaking investigations using pathology, forensic science and ballistics are on display as well as some unusual exhibits such as a pane of glass bearing an ear-print that led to the conviction of one man.

Waddell, a trained criminologist who served 30 years in the police force before becoming curator, uses black humour but says the museum is a salutary experience not to be trivialised.

The faint-hearted are advised not to visit the "Black Museum." Grisly exhibits include victims from one of Britain's most horrific series of murders, and glinting steel used to slice them up—"human stock" and "severed forearms" floating ominously in glass cases and "fantasy weapons." And no one can smile at the end of the tour!

Sepia photographs from late last century show the disembowelled victims of Jack the Ripper who terrorised London's gas-lit streets and who was never caught.

Other spine-chilling murders detailed include that of John Christie, a necrophiliac, who killed up to seven women.

The cruelty of notorious London gangs of the 1960s is shown by an electric generator used to torture victims. "One gang leader used to nail you to the floor," Waddell said.

There is a vice section complete with whips, spurs, shackles and flogging frame removed from brothels.

Weapons

In another part of the museum, two severed forearms float ominously in a glass case. They belonged to a suspect who shot himself in Cologne and Scotland Yard asked for fingerprints.

The Germans sent the arms. A typical example of Teutonic efficiency? Waddell smiles.

Also one show is possible the world's smallest murder weapon, a pallet used to kill Bulgarian dissident Georgi Markov in 1978 in London contained just 0.2 milligrams of poison.

One glass case illuminates a scribbled note from a London police officer to a special air service colonel which led to the ejection of the British Embassy to end a 1980 hostage siege.

The mangled helmet of a trooper of Queen Elizabeth's Household Cavalry who was killed by an Irish guerrilla's nail bomb in 1982 is a savage reminder of the effects of terrorism.

A collection of bombs spans relatively simple devices, a suitcase with a clock which triggered a pistol to fire into dynamite, to the most advanced explosives used by Irish fighters trying to oust Britain from Northern Ireland.

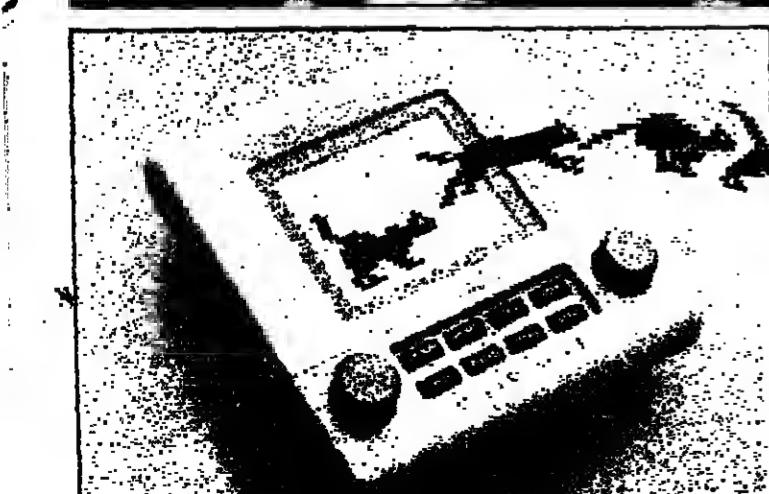
Brandishing a US-made Ingram M-11 machine gun taken from a guerrilla, Waddell said it was possible that criminals would soon start to use such powerful weapons.

The museum boasts an arsenal, all of which had been used in the last two years, of pistols, rifles and sabres and one martial arts chain which "could break a neck like a carrot."

Fantasy

Gadgets include binoculars that shoot spikes through the eyes sent to a girlfriend by a jealous lover, a barbed flail which can tear the scalp off a head and various other "fantasy" weapons first seen in horror films.

Waddell's face clouds at the stand which houses the tunic of a policeman stabbed more than 40 times by a mob at a London housing estate. "They wanted to put a policeman's head on a pole that might and they nearly succeeded."



Traditional toys — no matter how bold — have failed to match the phenomenal appeal of the wildly successful video games that raked up sales of \$2.7 billion last year — equivalent to 20 per cent of all toys sold.

Weird Al explodes like custard pie on screen

It's the craziest game show to hit television... the pungent Wheel of Fish. And coming soon will be the TV premier of the muscle-clenching movie Conan the Librarian.

All you have to do sample these off-beat television shows, and the whacky schedule packed with many more, is to tune in to channel 62. And you will find that little outfit in a new movie called *UHF*, which stars Hollywood's hottest, deepest new property.

Tycoons in Tinseltown are already reaching for their chequebooks as they watch "Weird Al" Yankovic, the new Robin Williams laugh-alike.

Before Al exploded like a custard pie on to the big screen, he penned a number of memorable musical classics. It was he whose

son's Beat, it was transformed into Eat it! And Madonna's like a Virgin was newly-minted as like a Surgeon. Queen's another One Bites the dust became a chortling Another One Rides the Bus.

Al was chuckling all the way to the bank, after making seven albums and two award-winning videos. Then it was the turn of the cinema to stand up and be laughed at.

In *UHF*, no star is safe, however big or muscular they are.

Al makes a mockery of Sylvester Stallone a Rambo. For one of the dream sequences, he dons latex rubber muscles — complete with bulging veins, criss-crossed scars and spray — on sweat.

And Harrison Ford's Indiana Jones character is seen in a new light, too.

In the plot a funny thing hap-

pens to that television station called Channel 62. George Newman — played by Al — is elated when his Uncle Harvey wins it in a poker game.

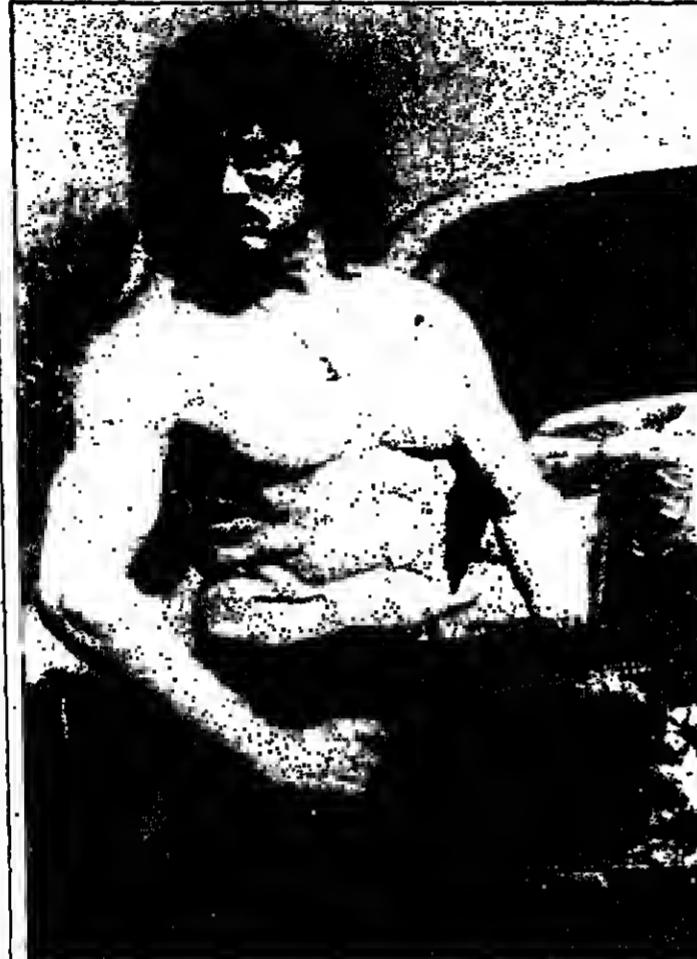
For zany George, who has never managed to hold down a job for more than 24 hours, is appointed manager. Uncle Harvey works on the principle that the station so bad it can't get any worse.

And, amazingly, George's daffy game shows and off-beat programmes succeed like crazy. His long-suffering girl-friend Teri, played by Victoria Jackson, can't believe it. The audiences, for example, just like going for a spin with that — a hauntingly familiar Wheel of Fish.

But all is not sunshine and laughter as George becomes locked in a ratings battle with a rival station.



George and his doting Aunt Esther, played by Sue Anne Langdon.



Weird Al in his latex-rubber Rambo muscles.

Science

Radiation study concerns scientists

SPOKANE, Washington. (UPI): Scientists studying what the radiation exposure levels around the Hanford Nuclear Reservation were during the cold war are trying to decide how to break the news of their preliminary findings to northwest residents.

The initial announcement of results from the first-ever study on the question is due in April, and the task of releasing the date is fraught with dangers of misinterpretation.

"We're walking such a fine line," said Mary Lou Blazek, Hanford programmes manager for the Oregon Energy Department in Salem, vice-chairperson of panel of independent scientists overseeing the \$1.5 million Energy Department multi-phase study of radiation exposure from Hanford.

The Hanford Environmental Dose Reconstruction Project, conducted by the government contractor Battelle Pacific Northwest Laboratories, was launched after the public learned for the first time in 1986 of massive radiation releases from Hanford.

Blazek said the initial announcement may involve hypotheticals, and stressed the information is subject to change as the study progresses.

"We may say if you were 16, and you lived in Pasco in '44-'46, and your food intake was this, then your dose could have been this," said Blazek.

Blazek, who chairs the communications sub-committee of the oversight panel, said scientists also may try to explain what the

health consequences of a certain dose could be.

"It's difficult because of the science involved," she said. "It's difficult because there are so many variables involved. You have to make so many assumptions.

"Say you have X millirems. That is equivalent to what? We can't even agree on that in our own panel," she said.

The government said in 1986 that more than 500,000 curies of iodine-131 were released between 1945 and 1956 from Hanford during accidents and planned experiments. An estimated 15 to 24 curies were released during the 1979 Three Mile Island nuclear accident.

The studies under way are designed to estimate how much of the radiation people were exposed to in the 570-square-mile (1,470 sq km) site along the Columbia River in south central Washington.

Hanford, an old complex of military reactors that is now focusing on cleaning up extensive environmental contamination, helped build the first atomic bomb exploded in New Mexico, as well as the weapon that fell on Nagasaki.

Many Hanford "downwinders" claim the radiation releases have increased the cancer rate in the area.

"A controversial and limited state study found cancer mortality rates near Hanford are actually lower than the national average,

although the federal centres for disease control is preparing to conduct its own \$5 million study of cancer rates in the area.

The CDC has previously estimated some 20,000 children may have drunk milk exposed to radioactive iodine from Hanford.

The Hanford Dose Reconstruction project is planned in four phases and may continue through 1993. Results from the first phase will reflect its limited scope, Blazek said.

The first phase focuses on 10 countries closest to Hanford, Washington, and other states.

No decision has been made on whether future phases will expand the study east and south into more of rural Washington and Oregon and into Idaho, or north of the region, population centre around Spokane.

The study's first phase will estimate exposure to iodine-131, although future phases could look at other isotopes.

The initial phase will examine exposure from airborne radiation from 1944 to 1947 and exposure through water from 1964 to 1966.

Indian tribes were not extensively studied in the first phase, but in later phases some eight northwest tribes are expected to participate. Scientists are interested in radiation exposure to Indians because their diets and lifestyles differed other populations.

While exposure levels have not been released, scientists have already come up with some potentially important conclusions.

All-American girl turns exotic European

HOLLYWOOD (UPI): Question: How does an all-US girl become an exotic Eastern European?

Answer: When she's cast in a movie titled *The Fourth War*.

The young woman in question is Lara Harris, who looks as if she were reared in Hungary, educated in Liechtenstein and currently living in Corfu. That's exotic.

To US eyes, including those of director John Frankenheimer, Harris appears to be 100 per cent European. No particular nationality, perhaps, but definitely from the "old country."

Her face is a seductive blend of Nastassja Kinski and Isabella Rossellini, which gives you some idea. She has large, luminous brown eyes, thick dark eyebrows, high cheek bones, dresden China skin and short light brown hair.

She has a slight overbite, which brightens her beauty, as it did with Ingrid

Bergman and Gene Tierney.

Harris, moreover, has a distinctively demure demeanor, a self-confidence born of years of modeling in this country and abroad.

But she is no more foreign than any other 24-year-old Chicago native who attended the University of Illinois, not the Sorbonne.

After modeling in Paris and studying acting in New York, appearing in two minor films, Harris came to Hollywood a year ago.

She gave herself one month to find work as an actress. Within two weeks Frankenheimer hired her.

In *The Fourth War*, Harris portrays a Czechoslovakian defector, complete with authentic accent, who becomes involved in an international border incident in West Germany. Her character is a mysterious figure who is not all

what she appears to be.

Harris herself is intriguing because she is not what she appears to be either.

The other day at lunch in the Beverly Hills Hotel Polo Lounge she attracted considerable attention. She wore a plain white blouse, dark skirt and no jewelry.

She did, indeed, give the appearance of a European star.

John (Frankenheimer) had agreed to see me for the part because my agent told him I had studied Russian in college," Harris said in a distinguishable Midwest accent.

"I can't speak Russian, but I can do English with a Slavic dialect. I have an ear for it," she said.

She demonstrated with a sentence or two an accent that perfectly matched her appearance.

"John had already started the film on location without a leading lady in Cal-

gary (Canada) and had looked at foreign actresses for weeks without success.

"Of course I was nervous and excited. I worried whether my accent would be good enough to play an Eastern European girl.

"After the reading, John said, 'O.K. good. You got the part.' I came back to New York to get some warm clothes and two days later was working in the picture.

"It was a thrill. It happened so fast; I had been working hard without much success and all of sudden I found myself acting in a big, important picture. I felt it was a kind of destiny thing."

"There was little about the Czechoslovakian political dissident that I could relate to. I've never known anyone like her and on top of that, she really isn't what she professes to be."

"She's not feminine either. John doesn't direct women in a feminine way.

The women in his pictures go along with the men.

"I play a very tough girl, which is against my basic nature. It was difficult to do. In one scene in which I was running for my life, John called out 'quit running like a debutante.'

"I can understand why I was cast as a European. People immediately mistake me for a European tourist or immigrant. When I see myself on screen I definitely recognise the foreign factor and I think that's fascinating. I love working with dialect and making the transformation. It allows me a choice."

"Producers and directors mostly cast for American parts and they're looking for actresses who exemplified American types. I have been told many times I look too foreign, too European, too moody, too dark, too everything for parts they are trying to fill."

Toy fair 1990: a preview

Video controls replace pretty, wacky, witty toys

NEW YORK. (UPI): Nintendo-crazed youths who have all but abandoned their toy chests in favour of video control pads have made it a rough couple of years for the country's \$13.25 million-a-year toy industry.

Traditional toys — no matter how bold — have failed to match the phenomenal appeal of Nintendo entertainment systems, the wildly successful video games that racked up sales of \$2.7 billion last year. That's the equivalent of 20 per cent of all toys sold.

In the face of such formidable competition, toy makers are to unveil conservative product lines for 1990 — including spin-offs of old standbys and variations on earlier successes — when the American International Toy Fair opens this week in New York.

New toys for boys, the heaviest Nintendo users, were among the most eagerly awaited introductions.

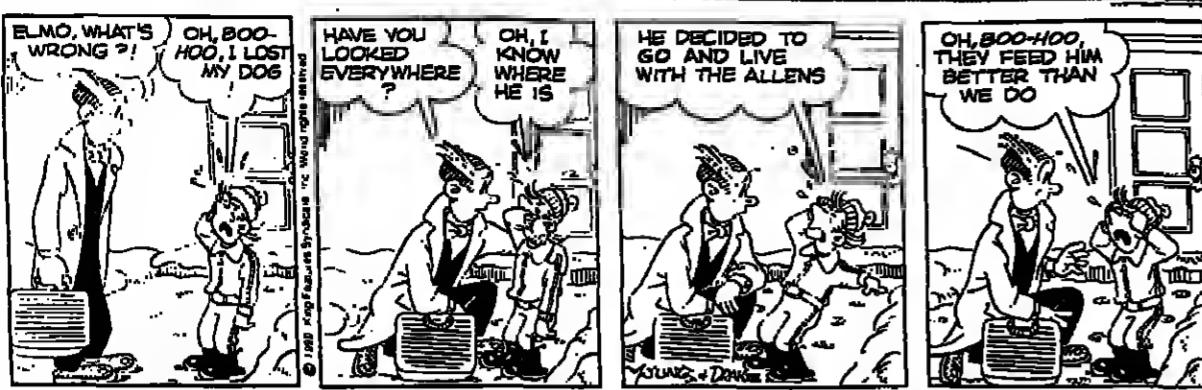
Topping the list: Dick Tracy action figures based on the movie about the square-jawed detective scheduled for June release.

Another summer release movie, "Days of Thunder," is giving Matchbox Toys (USA) Ltd a chance to capture some of the boys' market.

Matchbox plans a line of toy replicas of the Chevy Lumina race cars featured in the

movie about the stock-car circuit. They will retail for \$1.99, and the company expects to sell "as many as we can

BLONDIE — By Dean Young & Stan Drake



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE — By Dik Browne



AGATHA CRUMM — By Edith Head



BEETLE BAILEY — By Mort Walker



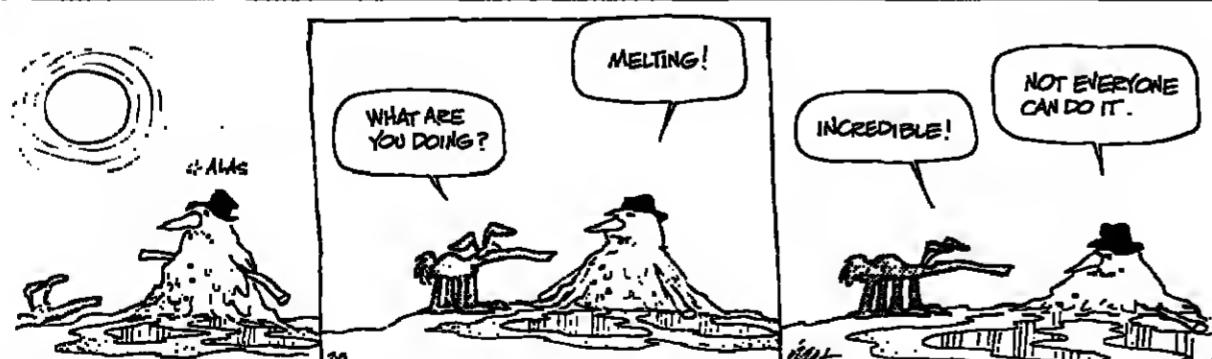
THE WIZARD OF ID — By Brian Parker & Johnny Hart



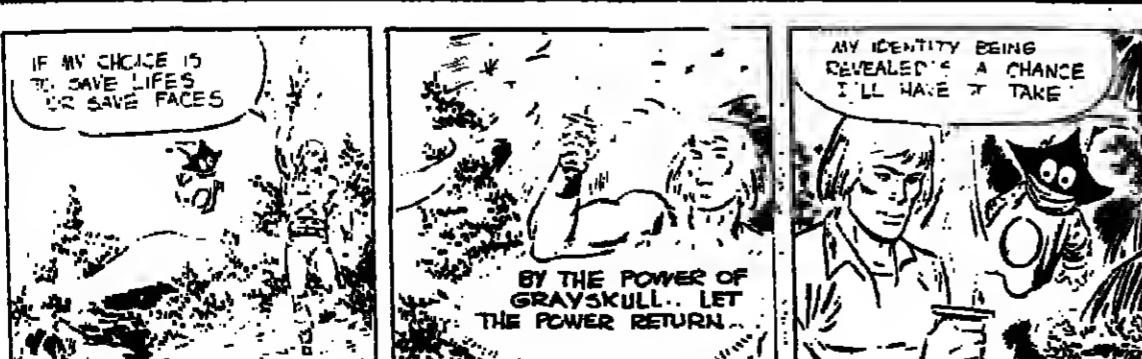
ANDY CAPP — By Dik Browne



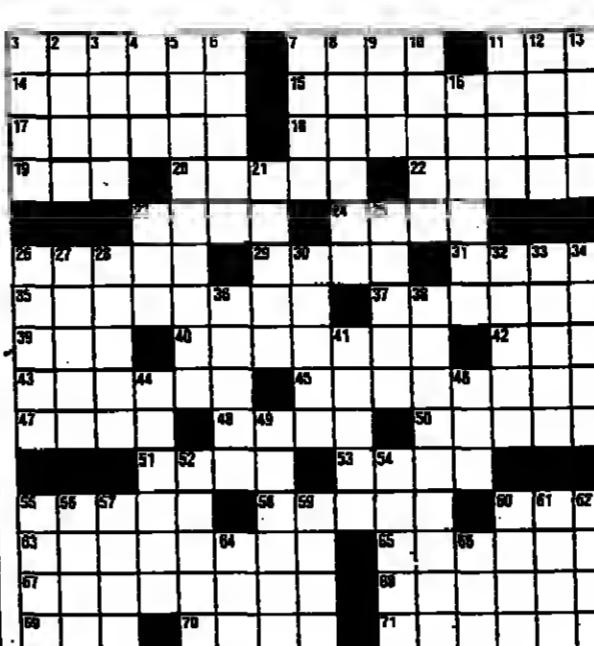
B.C. — By Johnny Hart



HE-MAN — By G. Forton & J. Shull



TODAY'S CROSSWORD



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AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

Both vulnerable. North deals.

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 ♠ K 8 5
 ♦ A Q J 9 4
 ♣ 7 5
 ♠ A Q 7

WEST
 ♠ 3
 ♦ 10 8 7 6 2
 ♣ 10 9 2
 ♠ J 9 6 5

EAST
 ♠ A Q 9
 ♦ 3
 ♣ A Q J 8 4 3
 ♠ 10 4 3

SOUTH
 ♠ J 10 7 6 4 2
 ♦ K 5
 ♣ K 6
 ♠ K 8 2

The bidding:
 North East South West
 1 ♠ 2 ♠ 2 ♠ Pass
 4 ♠ Pass Pass Pass
 Opening lead: Ten of ♠

On this hand from a team match, South's winning line is poetry itself. That it is not all that easy to spot is proved by the different results at the two tables.

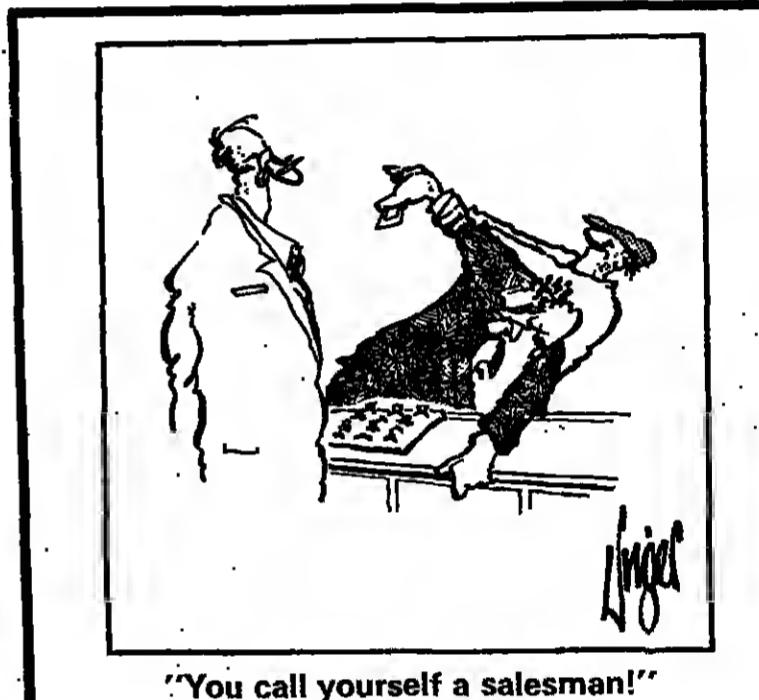
Both teams reached four spades on identical auctions. Since North had considerably more than a minimum with good support for partner's suit, a jump to four spades was

clearly warranted. Both West led the ten of diamonds and both Easts covered with the jack, conceding the first trick to declarer's king.

At one table declarer ran the jack of spades. East won the queen and shifted to the singleton heart. A trump to the king lost to the ace and East returned a low diamond. In with the nine, it was not too difficult for West to work out what was going on. He reverted to a heart and East's ruff spelled own one. Pretty defense.

At the other table, declarer returned a diamond at trick two! This simple maneuver broke communications between the defenders. East won and shifted to a heart, taken in the closed hand. Declarer also took the losing trump finesse, but here East had no way to get to his partner for a heart ruff. Declarer was able to win any return, force out the remaining high trump and once the last trump was drawn, claim his game.

Because the key to success lies in sniping the enemy communications, this technique has become known in the trade as the "Scissors Coup."

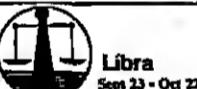


"You call yourself a salesman!"

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PLAY	MISTY	FORME
TACIT	AOK	ANNUL
EVAN	UNREST	TRI
SINGIN	INTHERAIN	
TOT	NOTICE	ARES
SINORT	ASH	STYLIE
NEED	SAT	
UMBRELLA	POLICY	
AREA	GUIDE	ERIE
OINT	ANNIE	RATA
DSTE	SATEO	SEER

ZODIAC STARS

Aries
March 21 - April 20Cancer
June 21 - July 22Libra
Sept. 23 - Oct. 22Capricorn
Dec. 21 - Jan. 19

You are all too liable to rely on guesswork and may easily go wrong. Take good care of your personal appearance. Ensure that you take sufficient regular exercise. Be fair.

You are rather too liable to judge by appearances and should refrain. Nothing is quite as it seems, so beware. Do not leave things until the last minute. Be sincere.

You are liable to take far too much for granted. Do not spend all or even most of your leisure watching television. Take care you do not overspend because of a miscalculation. Be alert.

If you expect to have all things your own way you will be disappointed. And if you ask for too much you will also be disappointed. Make sure you do not leave any doors or windows open when you leave home. Be generous.

Taurus
April 21 - May 20Leo
July 21 - Aug. 21Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 22Aquarius
Jan. 20 - Feb. 19

If you have made a promise do keep it even if it is a little to do so. Avoid eating foods with which you are not familiar for the moment. Do not spend in the expectation of some winnings before you receive them. Be patient.

A letter for which you have been waiting will not contain the news you had hoped for. However there will be compensations. Do not expect to have all things your own way. Be tactful.

Do not allow a grievance to grow out of all proportion and upset your judgements. And try to show a little more goodwill towards others. You should avoid saying anything you do not really mean. Be contented.

You should not do things in a certain way merely because you have always done them that way: there could well be a better way. You will find a stimulus to your enthusiasm, but try to keep a sense of proportion.

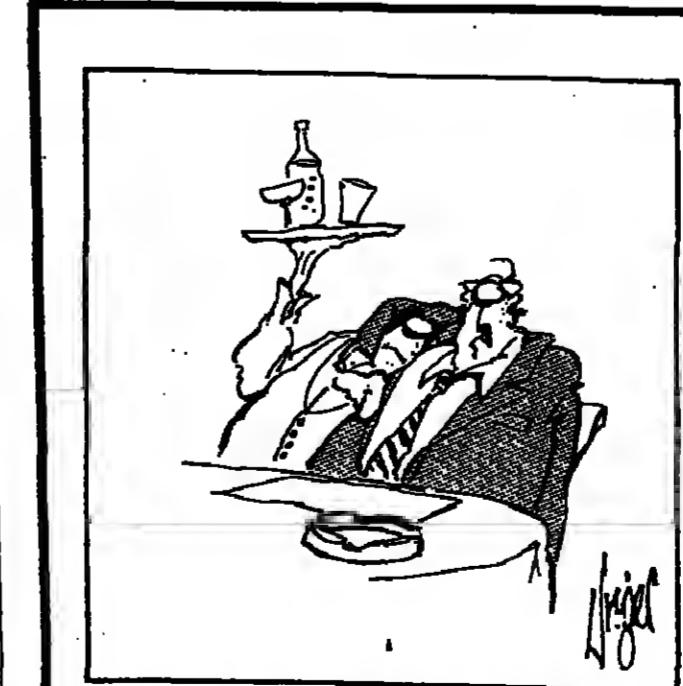
Gemini
May 21 - June 20Virgo
Aug. 23 - Sept. 22Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 22Pisces
Febr. 20 - March 19

You would be wrong to do anything that is even remotely against the law. And if others do exceed limits that is no excuse for your doing so. Do not neglect a slight infraction or it will worsen. Be sensible.

You are liable to worry about something that is unlikely to happen. Instead you should concentrate on what really is happening. Show just a little more interest in what interests your partner. Be moderate.

Start by doing what really has to be done and then relax the pace. If you do not put things back in the right place you may well get into a serious muddle.

You will have to deal with a person who takes offence easily. Your lucky numbers are 15 and 37. Avoid telling others that you think of them in too blatant terms. And for your part do not be too sensitive to criticism. Be respectful.



Hallie Lits

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Lewis set to keep place after impressive cricket debut

POR-T-OF-SPAIN, Trinidad, Feb 16. (Reuters) - Guyana-born Chris Lewis is set to retain his England place for the second one-day cricket international against West Indies here tomorrow after an impressive debut in Wednesday's rain-ruined opening match.

Lewis, having arrived in the Caribbean only on Sunday to

replace injured fellow pace bowler Ricardo Ellcock, could play in an unchanged team ahead of Phillip DeFreitas.

Pace man DeFreitas is battling to recover from a twisted knee that ruled him out of the first 50 overs match which was abandoned without a result. England made 26 for one from 13 over in reply to West

Indies 208 for eight when the rain came.

England captain Graham Gooch was very pleased with Lewis' performance, "especially he must have been very nervous."

Lewis took one for 30 in seven overs and was an outstanding contributor to the competitive out-

cricket which contained West Indies. He held a superbly-judged catch at long-on with aplomb to dismiss Ezra Moseley.

Gooch said England would have to wait and see about reaction from DeFreitas' right knee, which he hurt while bowling shortly before the start of Wednesday's match.

We bowled too many "four

balls," the skipper said.

Whatever the result of the five-Test series, England have already shown that in the remaining four one-day internationals they could run West Indies close.

Probable teams:
West Indies — Viv Richards (captain), Gordon Greenidge, Desmond

Haynes, Richie Richardson, Carl Hooper, Caribe Best, Jeff Dujon, Malcolm Marshall, Ezra Moseley, Ian Bishop, Courtney Walsh.

England — Graham Gooch (captain), Wayne Larkins, Robin Smith, Alan Lamb, Alec Stewart, David Capel, Jack Russell, Chris Lewis, Gladstone Small, Eddie Hemmings, Angus Fraser.

Hick not allowed to play for Districts

HARARE, Feb 16. (Reuters) — Zimbabwe's cricket officials, resigned to losing star batsman Graeme Hick to England, were disappointed yesterday to learn he would not be playing against the English A team this weekend.

Hick, who is seeking to qualify to play Test cricket for England, had asked the Test and County Cricket Board in London whether could play for Zimbabwe Districts against the touring side in Sunday's one-day match but was advised no to.

"It's a great shame for our point of view," David Elton Brown, Vice-president of the Zimbabwe Cricket Union (ZCU), told Reuters.

"But we've lived with the situation for a long time. We realize we've lost him, whether he plays for England this year or next year," he said.

Officials were anticipating a big crowd for Sunday's match at Harare South if the Zimbabwe-born Worcestershire batsman took the field in the first game of the England A's 10-match tour.

Hick's absence also highlights Zimbabwe's long-term loss as they strive to join the elite seven Test-playing nations.

The current tour is the first in which Zimbabwe will be participating in an unofficial five-day Tests following the International Cricket Council's decision in July last year to give them a trial period before deciding whether to grant full Test status.

"It would have been wonderful if he (Hick) had supported Zimbabwe in their quest for Test cricket," Elton-Brown said.

The touring England a cricket side left for Harare as scheduled yesterday after a stomach bug laid low half the team and forced cancellation of their third and last one-day cricket match in Nairobi on Wednesday.

Seven of the 14-strong squad were taken ill, although not seriously, after eating at a Nairobi restaurant on Tuesday.

Team manager Bob Beaumont told reporters he regretted the match against the Kenyan Cricket Association's Chairman's XI had to be cancelled.

The visitors beat Kenya in their first limited overs match by five wickets and then were beaten by the same margin in their second match.



Waqa Younus appeals for a lbw decision against Sri Lanka's Athula Samarasekera. (Reuter wirephoto)

Pakistan win easily

Rameez slams unbeaten ton

HOBART, Australia, Feb 16. (Reuters) — Opener Rameez Raja scored an unbeaten century to guide Pakistan to a comfortable six-wicket victory over Sri Lanka in their World Series Cup one-day match yesterday.

Pakistan scored 198 for four wickets off 48.3 overs after dismissing Sri Lanka for 195 and virtually assured themselves of a place in the three-match final against Australia beginning next week.

Rameez hit 116 from 150 balls to beat his previous highest score in one-day internationals by three runs.

Rameez and fellow opener Saeed Anwar attacked from the start, putting on a quick 46 before Saeed was dismissed for 17.

Pakistan stumbled slightly when Ejaz Ahmed was out for one four balls later but Rameez and Javed Miandad, who scored 42, took control of the match in a partnership worth 105 runs.

Sri Lanka had looked to be heading for a score over 200 when captain Arjuna Ranatunga, who scored 42, and Asanka Gurusingha, who hit 59, put on 73 runs for the fifth wicket.

But Pakistan's bowlers ripped through the middle order and tail to take the last six wickets for 44 runs. Waqa Younus was Pakistan's most successful bowler, finishing with four for 39.

Scoreboard

SRI LANKA	Athula Samarasekera lbw b Younus	7
	Brendon Konuppu c Yousuf b Younus	1
	Asanka Gurusingha b Younus	59
	Hasnain Tillekeratne b Imran	19
	Arevinda de Silva c and b Aqib	5
	Arjuna Ranatunga c Akram b Ghauri	42
	Roshan Mahanama c Younus b Ghauri	24
	Asoka de Silva b Younus	1
	Rumesh Ratnayake c Younus b Akram	14
	Graeme Labrooy c sub b Aqib	2
	Kapila Wijegunawardene not out	0
	Extras (lb-10 w-9 nb-2)	21
Total	198-47.5 overs	198
Fall of wickets:	1-62 2-53 3-62 4-79 5-151	
151 6-152 7-158 8-187 9-193.		

Bowling: Waqa Younus 9-2-23-1 (4w), Imran Khan 10-0-28-1, Waqa Younus 10-2-39-4 (3w), Aqib Javed 8.5-0-44-2 (2w), Nadeem Ghouri 10-0-51-2.

PAKISTAN

Rameez Raja not out	116
Saeed Anwar lbw b Rameez	17
Ejaz Ahmed lbw b	1
Wijegunawardene	42
Javed Miandad c de Silva b Labrooy	3
Salim Malik run out	10
Salim Younus not out	9
Extras (b-1 lb-4 w-4)	9
Total (for four wickets)	198
-48.3 overs	
Fall of wickets: 1-46 2-53 3-158 4-166.	

Bowling: Graeme Labrooy 9-1-41-1 (2w), Rumesh Ratnayake 9.0-47-1 (2w), Kapila Wijegunawardene 10-1-34-1, Arjuna Ranatunga 10-0-34-0, Asoka de Silva 10-0-34-0.



Rameez hit his best one-day score

India let down by poor fielding

HAMILTON, New Zealand, Feb 16. (Reuters) — New Zealand's Northern Districts profited from poor Indian fielding to end the first day of their four-day match at 268 for five today.

Northern Districts is the bottom team in the current local Shell Trophy competition.

India's position improved in the last five minutes of play when pace bowler Amit Wasson captured two wickets in one over.

The Districts' total included a painstaking 101 by opening batsman Kyle Wealeman and half-centuries by David White and Grant Badburn.

India's first success came 50 minutes before tea, when they claimed Chris Kuggelein, the Districts' captain and one of two Test players in the home side.

The Indians made their toil on a slow pitch harder by dropping four chances, three of them in the slips.

Kuggelein was the first to be let off, although he took much less advantage than Wealeman who, dropped only five minutes afterwards, batttered for 310 minutes.

Bradburn, the most aggressive of the Districts' batsmen, who was undeterred by 67, had his first escape at only 18 when Wasson failed to latch on to an upspin drive off Ajay Sharma.

Off the second new ball, he got away with a very straightforward slip chance to Chandrasekhar, at second slip, off Wasson.

However, Wasson gained some consolation in the last over of the day, having Grant McKechnie caught behind and Mark Bailey lbw to only the second ball he had faced in first-class cricket.

■ Four members of the touring Indian cricket team, including captain Mohammed Azharuddin, had their wallets robbed while they practiced at Seddon Park here yesterday.

The other losers were Vadakkai Chandrasekhar, Workeri Raman and Kapil Dev.

The thief made off with their cash and dumped their empty wallets in the home side's dressing room, police said.

The players' losses will be made good by the New Zealand Cricket Council, a spokesman for the council said.

The thief also helped himself to the contents of the till in the pavilion bar.

Scoreboard

NORTHERN DISTRICTS	first	Extras (lb-6, nb-5)	11
Linings		Total (for five wickets)	268
K. Wealeman c More b Sharma	101	To bat: B. Bracewell, D. Beard, S. Doull, P. Neutze.	
D. White v Venkatesh Raju	55	Fall of wickets: 1-109 2-162 3-237, 4-262, 5-264.	
C. Kuggelein c Chandrasekhar b Venkatesh Raju	24	Bowling: Wasson 19-2-81-2, Razdan 19-5-40-0, Venkatesh Raju 33-9-70-2, Venkatesh Raju 16-3-65-0, Raman 3-0-14-0, Sharma 12-4-30-1.	



Boris Becker

Navratilova routs White

Harvey tames Provis

CHICAGO, Feb 16. (Reuters) — Top seed Martina Navratilova conducted a comprehensive tennis clinic at the expense of fellow American Anne White at the \$500,000 Chicago tennis tournament yesterday.

Navratilova barely has time to work up a sweat as she despatched White 6-0 6-0 in just 40 minutes to advance to the quarterfinals.

Navratilova, who dropped just 11 points in the first set and 14 in the second, said she came into the match with the intention of working on various parts of her game.

"I've been working with Billy King on so many things," said Navratilova. "I worked on every facet of my game tonight I could, ground strokes, volleys, serves and footwork."

White admitted that she would not have bet against Navratilova coming into the match.

"I have to be a realist," said White smiling. "On my best day and on Martina's worst, I couldn't beat her. She'd have to break her arm and default for me to have a chance."

Local teen Linda Harvey-Wild proved that her first round upset of French champion Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain was no fluke by eliminating Australian Nicole Provis 6-4 6-1.

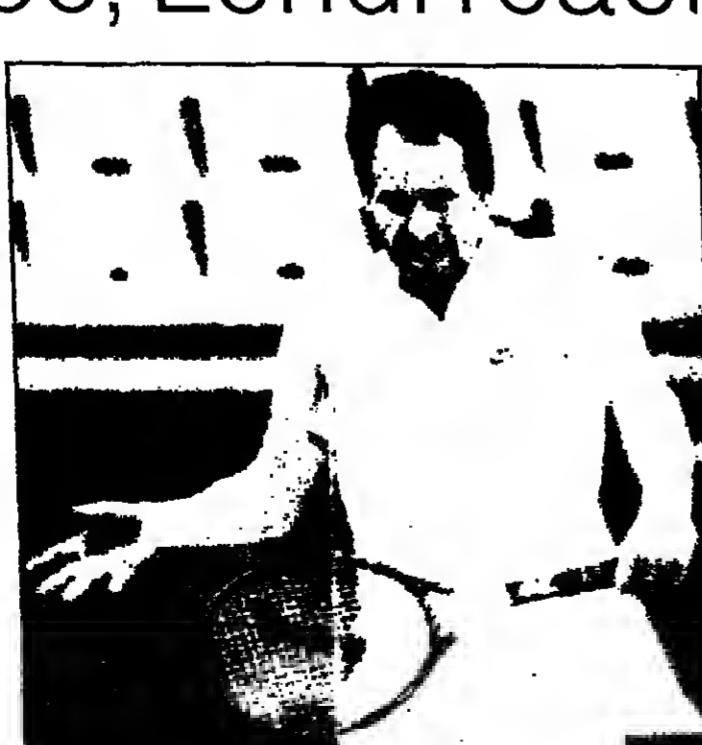


Navratilova returns a shot to White. (Reuter wirephoto)

"I didn't play as well as I did against Arantxa," said Harvey-Wild, who is playing in her first tournament as a professional.

"I feel like I am in the comfort zone playing at home in front of my friends," said the 19-year-old, who has become the darling of Chicago tennis fans.

McEnroe, Lendl reach quarterfinals



McEnroe slams ATP Tour chief

TORONTO, Feb 16. (Reuters) — Third seed John McEnroe did not appear happy on court but turned in a 6-4 6-3 victory over his friend Leif Shiras to move into the quarterfinals of the \$1.2 million Skydome world Tennis Tournament yesterday.

World number one Ivan Lendl led seven of the top eight seeds into the quarters with his 7-5 6-2 win over McEnroe's US Open conqueror, Paul Haarhuis of the Netherlands.

The top-seeded Lendl will meet eighth-seeded American Kevin Curren in the quarterfinals. Curren won a difficult battle with Grant Connell, the last remaining Canadian in the draw, 7-6 2-6 6-1.

McEnroe, who said his shoulder was bothering him, had brief exchanges with a photographer and the umpire, but managed to get through his match without a major outburst.

"It's a little bit difficult to play a friend," said the fourth-ranked McEnroe. "I feel physically I'm playing sub-par and that might contribute to my being a little bit nasty."

The 95th-ranked Shiras surprised many by staying with McEnroe. He played steady tennis throughout and McEnroe was forced to fight hard for his victory.

In the quarterfinals McEnroe

will meet fifth seed Jay Berger, who sent unseeded fellow American Ritchey Renberg packing 6-4 7-6.

Second seed Brad Gilbert has been somewhat ignored with Lendl and McEnroe grabbing

much of the Skydome spotlight, but the fifth-ranked American quietly moved into the quarterfinals with 6-2 6-2 victory over Czechoslovak giant Milan Srejcek.

This is not the players' Tour. "I've played really well in my

Unesco honours Fahd for service to sport

THE United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco) has honoured Sheikh Fahd Al Ahmed with an award for unusual services rendered to physical education and sport.

Sheikh Fahd, who is a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), is also the vice-president of the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC) and chairman of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA). At the national level, Sheikh Fahd is also the chairman of the Kuwait Olympic Committee and the Kuwait

Football Association, besides being involved in several sports clubs and cultural societies.

Sheikh Fahd's hobbies include writing poetry in Arabic and horse breeding. A well-known figure in the world of sport, Sheikh Fahd has already received several awards and a citation from the United Nations organisation for his actions in the struggle against apartheid in sport. Sheikh Fahd's two sons have already followed in their father's footsteps by becoming sports administrators. The

Unesco award will be presented to Sheikh Fahd next October.

■ Sam Ramsamy, the chairman of the South Africa Non-racial Olympic Committee (Sanroc) arrived yesterday in Kuwait to take part in the meetings of the IOC Apartheid and Olympic Commission. Ramsamy is a dedicated anti-apartheid campaigner and also advised to the IOC commission. Ramsamy is expected to brief the IOC officials on the latest political developments in South Africa.

Judge Keba Mbaye, vice-president of the International Court of Justice and also vice-president of the International Olympic Committee arrived yesterday in Kuwait for a two-day visit.

Judge Keba Mbaye will be chairing the IOC Apartheid and Olympic Commission meeting scheduled for Monday. The Senegalese judge was co-opted to IOC in 1972 and was the secretary-general of the organising committee of the Friendship Games held in Dakar, Senegal in 1963.

LOCAL FOOTBALL

BMW in top gear

BMW Football Club finally found the form that has eluded them so far this season when they beat Bargain House 4-2 in the League Cup.

Captain Steve Kelly admitted to being "deliriously happy" with a convincing win over old rivals Bargain House. "We never stopped running and we put our chances away, BMW, showed great commitment and that was the main difference between the two teams."

The game started with BMW looking a little shaky which was hardly surprising considering the poor performance exhibited by BMW so far this season, and Bargain House punished poor marking when Alan Wild put them ahead after 20 minutes. BMW, now beginning to settle down particularly in midfield, replied immediately with Yoshikai intercepting a poor throw by Bargain House keeper Ken Denehy, and thumping the ball home.

Easily

The second half began with BMW chasing and harrying for everything, especially in midfield. Their just reward came when Danny Craft shot them into the lead. Bargain House were not prepared to give up so easily and drew level after pressuring Tony Edwards to pass back to his keeper, who misplacing his kick, hefted the ball (to his dismay) over keeper Jimmy Denehy's head.

The BMW midfield immediately rallied their team and were justly put in front with Yoshikai making it 3-2. The match was finally put beyond the reach of Bargain House when Bargain House midfielder Karl Royal irresponsibly losing the ball to BMW's Barry Croucher, who proceeded to spray the ball to his teammate Kelly, which resulted in Kelly delivering a low cross into the box which was deflected into the net by skipper Dave Gray.

So, finally, BMW register their intention to compete for League and Cup honours by winning the match 4-2. A hard fought game which was well controlled by officials from the Kuwait Indian Football Federation.

France name soccer team

PARIS, Feb 16. (Reuter): French team chief Michel Platini yesterday left out defender Franck Silvestre and midfielder Marcel Dib from the 18 players who toured Kuwait last month when he named his squad for the soccer friendly against West Germany in Montpellier on February 28.

Young defender Remi Garde of Lyon and winger Pascal Vahirua of Auxerre, who made their international debuts in Kuwait, are retained.

France are unbeaten for almost a year and have won their last four official matches under Platini, who sees West Germany as the sternest test so far to his promising young side.

Squad:

Goalkeepers: Bruno Martini (Auxerre), Gilles Rousset (Sociaux).

Defenders: Manuel Amoros (Marseille), Basile Bol (Auxerre), Bernard Casoni (Toulon), Eric Di Meco (Marseille), René Gardé (Lyon), Franck Seuzer (Marseille).

Middlefielders: Laurent Blanc (Montpellier), Didier Deschamps (Marseille), Jean-Marc Ferreri (Bordeaux), Bernard Pardo (Bordeaux).

Forwards: Eric Cantona (Montpellier), Jean-Pierre Papin (Marseille), Christian Perez (Paris St Germain), Pascal Vahirua (Auxerre).

J.W. JONES

Saudis opt out of Cup

Kuwait ready to host soccer tourney

NICOSIA, Feb 16. (Agencies): Saudi Arabia has withdrawn its team from the Gulf Cup soccer tournament in Kuwait citing "special circumstances" for its decision.

A statement by the official Saudi Press Agency gave no further details of the kingdom's withdrawal from the seven-nation

tournament due to start on Tuesday.

"The Saudi Football Association regrets the Saudi team will not participate in the Gulf tournament in Kuwait," it said.

Meanwhile, the director of the organising committee, Mohammed Othman told Kuwait yesterday that the committee had completed all preparations that would make the tournament a success.

Mohammed Othman affirmed that the championship's opening which coincides with celebrations of the 29th anniversary of Kuwait's National Day will be patronised by HH the Amir.

The Amir will attend the inaugural ceremony, Othman said, emphasising that no matches are to be played on the opening day to reserve efforts "for making the inauguration an opportunity for Kuwaiti sportsmen and their guests from Arab Gulf countries to express happiness on the National Day."

15,500 school students will take part in the inaugural ceremony and perform an operetta coupled with seven shows to be demonstrated through banners and portraits, telling past and present achievements of participant states.

The songs of the operetta were co-written by the president of the higher organising committee and chairman of Kuwait Football Association Sheikh Fahd Al Ahmed and Kuwaiti song-writer Abdul Latif Al Banayy.

The operetta is to be performed by Kuwait's prominent singers Abdul Karim Abdul-Qadir and Abdullah Rawashid together with a schoolboys chorus as other

students are displaying colourful background-portraits that would concentrate on participant countries' folklore heritage, Mohammed Othman said.

■ In Amman, Sheikh Fahd, in a joint press conference with chairman of the International Olympic Committee Juan Antonio Samaranch held last night, said that although he would like to see Kuwait crowned champion of the tournament, his main goal is the success of the gathering.

On Saudi Arabia's sudden decision to withdraw from the tournament, he said that he heard the news, but had not been formally notified. He said he had tried to contact the Saudis to inquire about the reasons for the withdrawal.

Praising Arab trainers in various sports, Sheikh Fahd said that most Arab sports teams rely on foreign trainers due to the shortage of Arab coaches and also the high standard of foreign ones.

On a dispute inside the Kuwait Olympic Committee, he indicated that the issue was on whether to establish a higher council or a ministry of youth that takes care of sports affairs.

Sheikh Fahd also called on the Arab media to practice objectivity and constructive criticism.

Samaranch noted that the IOC was studying Palestine's bid to become a committee member and said that the decision would be made during the coming meeting in Tokyo.

Both Sheikh Fahd and Samaranch affirmed that the IOC will fight steroids use by athletes to boost their performance in competition.

Oldham hit Hammers for six

LONDON, Feb 16. (Reuter): Andy Ritchie propelled Oldham towards the English League Cup soccer final with two goals in a 6-0 semi-final first-leg drubbing of West Ham on Wednesday.

Ritchie maintained his record of scoring in every round, netting one in each half as Oldham obliged manager Roy Keane in turning the second leg against fellow Second Division West Ham into a formality.

Oldham might easily have reached double figures as they made virtually certain of a final appointment against the winners of the clash between First Division rivals Tottenham Hotspur and Coventry. Holders Forest won their home leg 2-1 last Sunday.

Neil Adams opened Oldham's tally in the 11th minute and further goals by Ritchie and Earl Barrett gave the home side a 3-0 half-time edge on their artificial pitch. Rick Holden, Roger Palmer and a second strike by Ritchie completed the rout.

Ritchie has so far succeeded in emulating manager Royle, the former England striker who scored in every round for Manchester City when they won the trophy in 1976.

In the First Division, a last-minute goal by Iain Dowie earned struggling Luton a 2-1 win at Wimbledon.

Luton moved up one place to two from the foot of the table — ahead of Millwall and tailender Charlton — after their victory. Wimbledon's Dennis Wise had earlier equalised Welsh international Kurt Nogaa's last.

Troubled Manchester United travel to Second Division Newcastle on Sunday in what could be a giant-killing encounter while Third Division Blackpool also have a chance to cause an upset when they host Queens Park Rangers.

■ Holders Liverpool host the only all-First Division match in the fifth-round FA Cup tomorrow but it is last year's losing finalists Everton who face the more awesome tie.

While League leaders Liverpool play Southampton, beaten 3-1 by Crystal Palace in the League at the weekend, their City rivals travel to Second Division Oldham, who have not lost on their artificial pitch for 32 games.

"I wouldn't think they will relish coming here," West Ham manager Lou Macari said about Everton's chances after the match.

Southampton's 35-year-old midfielder Jimmy Case is fighting to recover from a knee injury sustained at the weekend in time for the match against his former employers.

"I would play with a broken leg if I had to. This is one match I do not want to miss," he said. "At my age you never know if it is going to be your last visit to Anfield."

The other First Division ties tomorrow have second-placed Aston Villa away to Second Division neighbours West Bromwich Albion and Crystal Palace at home to Fourth Division Rochdale, enjoying their best ever Cup run.

Troubled Manchester United travel to Second Division Newcastle on Sunday in what could be a giant-killing encounter while Third Division Blackpool also have a chance to cause an upset when they host Queens Park Rangers.

Having played all their games at home against lowly "opponents" to reach the fifth round of the Cup for the first time in 31 years, relegation-threatened Blackpool will have a capacity crowd of 9,000 cheering them on.

"Everyone would expect us to be underdogs because we are against First Division opposition but this is a one-off in the Cup when anything can happen," said manager Jimmy Mullen.

"There are a lot of star players in the QPR team but nobody here is overawed by the opposition," he said, despite Rangers' foot conceding a goal so far in four FA Cup ties.

Oldham's plastic pitch has often been blamed for their guests' poor performance but Macari refused to use the excuse.

"If we had trained on that for three weeks it would have made no difference. They caught Arsenal and Southampton here as well; it was so one-sided it was unbelievable," he said.

Oldham humiliated League champions Arsenal 3-1 in the fourth round of the League Cup last November while high-flying Southampton fell 2-0 in their League Cup quarterfinal replay.

Steroid doctor may sue Johnson

TORONTO, Feb 16. (Reuter): The doctor who supplied disgraced Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson with steroids is threatening to sue the athlete for failing to pay him for medical treatment, a newspaper reported on Wednesday.

Dr Jamie Astaphan is demanding \$25,000 from Johnson for medical treatment and \$8,333 from the government to cover travel costs for testifying at a federal inquiry in Toronto into the use of drugs in sport, the Toronto Sun said.

Efforts to contact Astaphan at his home in the Caribbean island of St Kitts were unsuccessful.

"Ben Johnson owes me 30,000 (Canadian) dollars (\$25,000). If it means going to court, I will take him to court," the newspaper quoted Astaphan as saying.

Astaphan also said he wanted to be in charge of drug testing for the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona and offered to share the job with Dr Mauro Di Pasquale, a Canadian steroids expert.

"Nobody could look either one of us," Astaphan said. "I've been there, I know where it's at, I know where it's going," he said.

Faldo could take over from Norman as world number one if he wins and the Australian finishes out of the top 20. While this is unlikely, the duel over the Huntingdon course should be a fascinating affair.

Faldo and Norman, who shot 68s in the first round, were among eight golfers who started four shots behind overnight leader Mike Clayton of Australia.

Clayton finished three strokes off the lead, after a double bogey at the 13th hole contributed to a 74.

Norman notched three birdies in the first seven holes, putting beautifully throughout his round played in hot, windy conditions. He dropped only one shot with a bogey five on the ninth.

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Malaga's Merino (left) tries to block a shot from Cadiz's Canilles. (Reuter wirephoto)



Real's Bernd Schuster (right) avoids a sliding tackle from Barcelona's Bakero. (Reuter wirephoto)

Real edge Barcelona

MADRID, Feb 16. (Reuter): Barcelona coach Cruyff and two of his players were sent off in an explosive climax to their Spanish Soccer League match against arch-rivals Real Madrid yesterday.

The dismissals came at the end of an incident-packed clash which defending champions Real won 3-2 at their Santiago Bernabeu stadium to go six points clear of second-placed Atletico Madrid.

In the space of three minutes, Barcelona's Dutch international Ronald Koeman was sent off for kicking Paco Llorente and Elosio Pires was expelled for headbutting Martin Vaquez.

Dutchman Cruyff dashed on to the pitch to protest at the red card against Koeman and earned the same punishment for refusing to leave the pitch. He was eventually escorted from the touching by police.

Barcelona, now nine points behind the leaders, trailed after 25 minutes when Michel Gonzalez ham-

mered a left-foot shot past Spain's World Cup goalkeeper Andoni Zubizarreta.

Urged on by their fans in a crowd of 92,000, Real extended their lead from a penalty awarded 10 minutes later when Eloisio floored Emilio Butragueno. Mexican striker Hugo Sanchez took the spot kick which Zubizarreta managed to stop but hit out Butragueno.

One minute after half-time Sanchez notched his 25th goal of the season for Real, putting them 3-0 ahead with a penalty that followed a foul on Butragueno by Zubizarreta.

Apart from the ugly closing incidents, the match produced a flutter of yellow cards, meaning Barcelona will be without Jose Bakero and Eloisio against Rayo Vallecano on Sunday while Real will not have Manolo Sanchez for the away game against Malaga who defeated Cadiz 1-0 on Wednesday.

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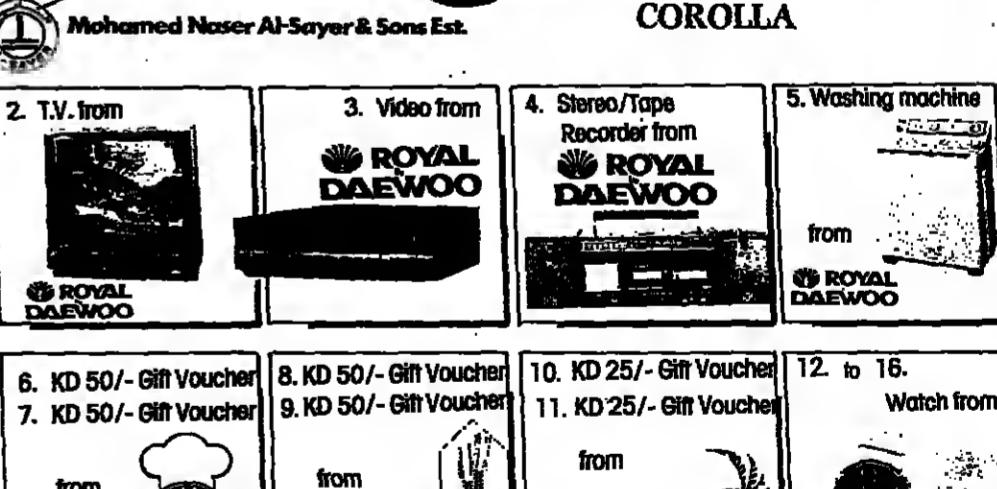
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CONTEST QUESTIONS:

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Country: _____ Year: _____
2. Name the player who scored the most goals in a single tournament?
3. Who will win the Gulf Cup Tournament held in Kuwait 1990?

Competition coupon

Name (full):

Top E. Germans on drugs since mid '70s, say scientists

EAST BERLIN, Feb 16. (Reuters): Doping has been commonplace in some areas of East German sport for at least 15 years, two East German sports scientists said yesterday.

"It is true that top athletes in power sports have been doping here to boost their training for years. It all started in the mid-1970s," said professor Hermann

Buhl from East Germany's leading sports medicine centre in Leipzig.

"Athletes mainly taken drugs, such as anabolic steroids, during training. It has been carefully controlled. Coaches and doctors have known all about it. Some athletes have been forced to take the drugs," Buhl told Reuters.

Allegations that drugs have been

behind East Germany's remarkable success story in Olympic sport have been made before by East German athletes who defected to the West before hardline communist rule collapsed late last year.

The state's top athletes and officials have vehemently denied the claims.

But Buhl's remarks, backed up by a co-founder of the Leipzig Medical Centre,

professor Lothar Pickenhain, are the first allegations of widespread drug abuse to be made by East German sports officials still living in the country.

Buhl works with a team of scientists who research the pressure put on athletes' bodies during training. They have discovered when the human body is best placed to receive medical support.

He said the centre's research helped advise coaches and athletes but the scientists were never involved themselves in the administration of drugs or any medicine.

Pickenhain, who left the Leipzig centre in 1979, said talks with athletes and coaches had convinced him many stars in sports like athletics and swimming were on drugs.

"The majority are doped. I'm convinced of that," Pickenhain told Reuters. "Much went on only during training, not before big events. The Leipzig lab was secret before and we couldn't talk publicly about doping. Now we can."

He added: "It has always been obvious that some athletes took drugs. You only had to look at the large bodies of some of

the women to realize they had taken steroids. Some of them had very low voices too."

East Germany has risen to prominence as one of the Olympic superpowers in the last 20 years. At the 1988 Seoul Games it won the second highest number of gold medals behind the Soviet Union.

Spain stun England

Argentina hold Netherlands



Bovender scored two for the Dutch

plest of chances set up by Tim Delavenne.

West Germany, Australia and Pakistan today scored their third successive victories to maintain their dominance today.

West Germany recorded their biggest win in the Cup when they beat Ireland 4-0 but were joined at the top of Group B by Pakistan when they beat Canada 1-0.

Australia cruised to a comfortable 3-0 win over the Soviet

Union, to give them maximum

six points and tighten their grip on Group A. The Soviet Union, with one point, are at the bottom.

Australia once again did well with their penalty corners, Michael York scoring in the fifth minute and Greg Corbett in the 60th. In between Neil Hawgood netted an opportunist field goal in the 52nd.

The Germans were out on

their best form but still good.

enough to outclass Ireland and win a perfect record of 17 wins in 17 encounters.

Outstanding German forward Stefan Blocher forced and converted a 10th minute penalty stroke and scored West Germany's fourth and last goal with a typical burst through the middle of the Irish defence in the 56th minute.

Netherlands dropped a point today when they were held to a 3-3 draw by Argentina. Floris-Jan Bovender put the Dutch ahead in the 5th minute of the first half but the Argentines levelled the match in the 33rd minute through Carlos Geneyro. The half-time score remained 1-1.

Marc Delissen made it 2-1 for

the Dutch in the first half and

Bovender added to the score

two minutes later. The Argentines however fought back

brilliantly.

Fernando Ferrara pulled one

back for Argentina in the 57th

minute and Alejandro Doherty

got the equaliser in the last minute of the match. Argentina still

have only three points from their

three games while the Dutch

have five.

Standings

Standings: (tablets under played, won, drawn, lost, for, against, points)

Group A

Australia	3	3	0	0	10	2	6
Netherlands	3	2	1	0	9	10	5
Argentina	3	1	0	2	4	6	2
France	3	0	1	2	4	6	1
India	3	0	1	2	3	9	1
Soviet Union	3	0	1	2	3	9	1

Group B

W Germany	3	3	0	0	10	1	6
Pakistan	3	3	0	0	9	10	5
England	3	2	0	1	5	4	4
Spain	3	0	0	2	7	9	0
Ireland	3	0	0	3	1	8	0



All the winners with Sheikh Ahmed (3rd right)

Adams triumphs twice



Strakos receives her prize.



Some of the spectators watching the proceedings.

Vicini picks young team

ROME, Feb 16, (Reuters): World Cup hosts Italy, aiming to wipe out bad memories of recent friendlies, today named a young team spearheaded by Napoli striker Andrea Carnevale for next week's game against the Netherlands in Rotterdam.

But manager Azzeglio Vicini, who has promised "an aggressive, fast, brilliant Italy" by the June finals, has injury problems and may have to wait a while longer to see his dream fulfilled.

Wednesday's match follows a string of disappointing friendlies against Brazil, England, Algeria and World Cup holders Argentina late last year that saw Italy score only once — a goal against the Algerians widely regarded as offside.

Gianluca Viali, the gifted Sampdoria striker Vicini is counting on to score Italy's goals, has a broken foot.

Internazionale's 26-year-old defender Riccardo Ferri, another key component of Italy's expected World Cup squad, is recovering from a shoulder injury.

Holyfield ready to fight new world champion

NEW YORK, Feb 16, (Reuters): Evander Holyfield, number one contender for the world heavyweight boxing title, is ready to fight newly-crowned champion James "Buster" Douglas despite demands by de-throned Mike Tyson for a rematch.

Holyfield had been prepared to step aside to allow a Tyson-Douglas rematch in June under an agreement promising him a fight with the winner, but the Douglas camp has since said that the new champion might not fight again until September.

Holyfield's manager Dan Duva said in a statement that a delay in the next Douglas fight had altered the picture and Holyfield was now ready to face the champion within 120 days, as ordered by the World Boxing Association.

"Evander Holyfield has been the number one heavyweight contender for over a year now," Duva said. "He was good enough to step aside and allow Tyson to fight Douglas last week, with the agreement he would fight the winner. He even considered allowing them to fight again in June before getting his shot."

"But if Douglas wants to wait until September to fight again, then Holyfield has no choice but to assert his rights as the number one contender and demand his shot at the title next, within the time frame set by the WBA."

Lakers sail past Kings

SACRAMENTO, California, Feb 16, (AP): James Worthy scored 20 points as Los Angeles beat Sacramento for the eighth consecutive time.

Wayman Tisdale scored 23 points for Sacramento, and Antoine Carr added 17 in his debut for the Kings, who acquired him from Atlanta on Tuesday. Carr scored nine points in the final three minutes as the Kings tried futilely to come back from a 14-point deficit.

Bryon Scott and Magic Johnson had 17 points each for the Lakers, who are now a full game ahead of Portland in the Pacific division.

Warriors 113, Bullets 107

Tim Hardaway scored 24 points and Chris Mullin added 23 as Golden State defeated Washington for a franchise-record 15th consecutive home victory.

Results

Atlanta	130	Orlando	123
Seattle	103	Los Angeles	92
Houston	124	New York	105
Golden State	113	Washington	107
L.A. Lakers	101	Sacramento	92

Speedbird Trophies

GREAT BRITAIN will play Pakistan in the second of the British Airways-sponsored Speedbird Trophies to be played this season. The match will take place on February 25, Kuwait National Day, at the KOC Grounds, Ahmadi. Play will start at 9.30 am and continue for a scheduled 45 overs per innings.

Over the past few years the Pakistan team have held the edge in the encounters. Their strength has come from some very powerful batting. However, the Great Britain team is still smarting from the defeat imposed on them by India in December and will not want a repeat.

As usual British Airways, through the Marketing Manager, Trevor Owen, will be providing prizes to the winning team and awards for the Men of the Match.



Title fight

Five-time world boxing champion Thomas Hearns (left) and Michael Olajide (right) pose for photographers at a press conference in New York. Hearns and Olajide will fight for the World Boxing Organisation's super middleweight title on April 28. (Reuter wirephoto)

Bin Sulayem makes winning start

Bin Sulayem: scores easy victory

Bin Sulayem: scores easy victory